

President Obama's budget

In February, President Barack Obama released his FY2013 budget request to Congress, communicating his priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. In his budget, the President requested level funding, or the FY2012 amount of \$184.7 million, for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).

While the FY2013 budget request does not reflect a decline, it is worth noting that from FY2010 to FY2012 funding for LSTA was cut by 13.5 percent. LSTA funds are distributed via the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to public, academic, research, school, and special libraries in every state.

Next, Congress will take the President's FY 2013 budget request and work to pass an appropriations bill before the fiscal year draws to a close at the end of September. However, since it is an election year, the exact timeline or passage of an appropriations bill is unclear.

For additional information on federal funding for libraries, including the President's FY 2013 appropriations budget and updates, please see www.ala.org/advocacy/libfunding/fed/.

Research Works Act abandoned

The lifespan of the anti-open access bill introduced in December 2011 and reported in the February 2012 Washington Hotline, the Research Works Act (H.R. 3699), has proven to be short-lived. In late February, the publishing company Elsevier (rumored backer of the bill) publically announced it was withdrawing support for the bill—essentially rendering the bill dead. In addition, the bill's cosponsors, Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) and Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) released

a joint statement indicating they would no longer be taking legislative action on the bill.

On a related note, ALA continues to strongly support passage of pro-open access legislation—the Federal Research Public Access Act (FRPAA) of 2012 (S. 2096, H.R. 4004). Additional information on these bills is available at www.ala.org/advocacy/access-legislation.

Madison Award winner announced

This year's ALA James Madison Award was presented to Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) at the annual Freedom of Information Day Forum on March 16, 2012, in Washington, D.C. Since 1994, Lofgren has served as a Democratic member of the U.S. House of Representatives from the 16th district of California, which includes the city of San Jose (aptly nicknamed the "Capitol of Silicon Valley"). Lofgren has long been, and continues to be, a champion for libraries and those they serve and is highly regarded by the library community for her work on copyright, digital rights, network neutrality, and open access to information, among other issues.

In addition, Lofgren does not shy away from tough legislative issues, as demonstrated during the U.S. House Judiciary Committee's recent mark-up on H.R. 3261, the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA). During the lively debate, the Congresswoman called attention to the potential harm the bill would inflict on First Amendment free speech rights, intellectual freedom, cybersecurity, and privacy rights, and was instrumental in ultimately halting further action being taken on the bill.

The James Madison Award is named for President James Madison and is awarded annually to an individual or group who has championed, protected, and promoted public access to government information and the public's "right to know." *ZZ*

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