



February 28, 2006

The Honorable Charles H. Taylor, Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
B-308, Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6023

The Honorable Norman D. Dicks
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6023

Dear Chairman Taylor and Ranking Member Dicks:

The Medical Library Association (MLA) and Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL) write to express our concern for the proposed \$2.5 million cut in the FY 2007 budget of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that could result in closing the Headquarters Library and many of its 27 regional and laboratory libraries.

MLA and AAHSL understand and respect the need for responsible stewardship of our nation's tax dollars—a reality of our current environment. However, we are concerned about the impact these proposed cuts could have on the ability of the EPA's researchers, scientists, and the American public to gain access to the scientific literature produced by the Agency.

We understand that the EPA has begun addressing strategies for streamlining its programs and services, including ways it provides information and information services, and is moving forward to implement some of these changes. MLA and AAHSL respectfully ask the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies to request clarification and justification from the EPA for how they will ensure that the information services and resources provided by the Headquarters and regional libraries and laboratories are preserved and continue to be made accessible by all who need them during this time of transition and change. As associations of health information professionals, MLA and AAHSL believe it is crucial to have a clear road map for how the EPA will manage information to support sound science and effective regulation now and in the future. For this reason, we ask that the Subcommittee intervene and direct the EPA to keep the libraries open and the collections and services intact until these issues have been fully explored and brought to successful resolution.

MLA and AAHSL believe that the other component that must be recognized and addressed is the role of the librarian in knowledge management and the value that they bring to the delivery of EPA's information services. Librarians have the training, the skill, and the expertise to collect, find, and organize information. Librarians understand the mission of the EPA and can relate that

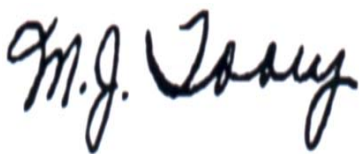
to the information needs of their clients. As knowledge managers, librarians are skilled at teaching and searching which enables researchers, scientists, and the public to become effective and critical users of the Internet. While individual scientists and staff can accomplish a great deal on their own, librarians possess the specialized knowledge of how databases work that allows them to access the most accurate, reliable, and up-to-date resources in the most cost effective and efficient way. Because librarians are central to the intellectual capital of the EPA, it is important that these key personnel not be lost through the closing of libraries.

MLA, a nonprofit, educational organization, comprises health sciences information professionals with more than 4,500 members worldwide. Through its programs and services, MLA provides lifelong educational opportunities, supports a knowledgebase of health information research, and works with a global network of partners to promote the importance of quality information for improved health to the health care community and the public.

AAHSL is composed of the directors of libraries of 142 accredited U.S. and Canadian medical schools belonging to the Association of American Medical Colleges. AAHSL's goals are to promote excellence in academic health sciences libraries and to ensure that the next generation of health practitioners is trained in information-seeking skills that enhance the quality of health care delivery.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our views with you and are available to respond to any questions or concerns you may wish to address on this issue.

Sincerely,



M.J. Tooley, AHIP, President
Medical Library Association
65 E. Wacker Pl., Ste. 1900
Chicago, IL 60601-7246



Logan Ludwig, Ph.D., President
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries
2150 N. 107th St., Ste. 205
Seattle, WA 98133-9009



February 28, 2006

The Honorable Conrad Burns, Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
132 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Byron Dorgan, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
160 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Burns and Ranking Member Dorgan:

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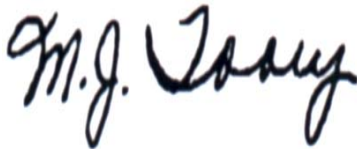
teaching and searching which enables researchers, scientists, and the public to become effective and critical users of the Internet. While individual scientists and staff can accomplish a great deal on their own, librarians possess the specialized knowledge of how databases work that allows them to access the most accurate, reliable, and up-to-date resources in the most cost effective and efficient way. Because librarians are central to the intellectual capital of the EPA, it is important that these key personnel not be lost through the closing of libraries.

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