

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE AALL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS OFFICE (GRO)**

### **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE GRO IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AALL POSITIONS ON INFORMATION POLICY ISSUES?**

The GRO works on information issues in accordance with AALL's Government Relations Policy. Staff consults on a regular basis with the Copyright Committee, Digital Access to Legal Information Committee, Government Relations Committee, and, as appropriate for specific issues, with the President, Executive Director, and/or Executive Board. The GRO closely adheres to policies which have been established by the Association.

### **HOW DOES THE ASSOCIATION DETERMINE POLICY IN A NEW OR DEVELOPING AREA NOT ALREADY ADDRESSED BY THE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS POLICY?**

Information policies in new or developing areas must be approved by the AALL Executive Board and typically come to the Board in the form of recommendations and/or motions from the Government Relations Office or an AALL committee or task force. In addition, the Executive Board may take action to determine a new policy or such a policy may be brought forward by AALL members through the resolution process.

### **WHO IS AUTHORIZED TO SPEAK ON BEHALF OF AALL REGARDING INFORMATION POLICY ISSUES?**

The official and customary spokespersons on information policy matters are the President, the Executive Director, and the Director of Government Relations. According to their charges, the Government Relations Committee and the Copyright Committee may, in accordance with Committee and Association policy, work with the Government Relations Office to prepare and communicate Association positions to appropriate governmental bodies and to other interested groups, while keeping the President and the Executive Board informed of all such efforts. See the Speaking for AALL policy and the committee charges for more information.

### **WHO DETERMINES WHETHER AALL PRESENTS TESTIMONY AT A CONGRESSIONAL OR OTHER HEARING? WHO SELECTS THE PERSON TO TESTIFY AND WHO WRITES THE STATEMENT?**

The Government Relations Office monitors significant legislation and legal developments within AALL's areas of interest. If a hearing is scheduled on such an issue, the Association may be invited to or may ask to provide a representative to present testimony. The Director of Government Relations and the President determine the name to be submitted as a potential witness. The proposed witness could be the President, the Director of Government Relations, or an AALL member who has expertise on the topic. If AALL does receive an invitation to testify, the testimony is often drafted by the Director of Government Relations, in consultation with the Government Relations Committee.

### **WHAT ROLE DOES THE GRO TAKE IN ADDRESSING INFORMATION POLICY ISSUES AT THE STATE AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS?**



Although the GRO focuses primarily on information policy issues at the federal level, the office became involved in a state issue in the late 1990s, when AALL took a strong position in opposition to the Uniform Computer Information Transactions Act (UCITA). Today, the GRO is involved in several state issues, including promoting adoption of the uniform electronic legal material act.

The GRO is available to assist chapters who are concerned with state issues of information policy and to offer advice. AALL chapters monitor state issues on an ongoing basis for the AALL Government Relations Committee and the GRO. AALL has also been involved internationally on the issue of copyright law, seeking to promote balance in copyright law and protect fair use and the public domain.

### **HOW CAN AN AALL MEMBER LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION'S INFORMATION POLICY POSITIONS?**

The GRO has a webpage on AALLNET ([www.aallnet.org/gro](http://www.aallnet.org/gro)). Staff is available to talk with members, as are the chairs of the Copyright Committee, the Digital Access to Legal Information Committee, and the Government Relations Committee. AALL members are also welcome to contact AALL officers and Executive Board members about the Association's information policy positions.

### **HOW CAN LAW LIBRARIANS BECOME INVOLVED IN AALL ADVOCACY EFFORTS OR BRING AN ISSUE TO THE ATTENTION OF THE GRO?**

AALL members interested in becoming involved in advocacy are encouraged to contact Director of Government Relations Emily Feltren ([efeltren@aall.org](mailto:efeltren@aall.org)) or the current Chair of the Government Relations Committee ([www.aallnet.org/assn/Committees.aspx?code=COM\\_GOV](http://www.aallnet.org/assn/Committees.aspx?code=COM_GOV)). Advocacy workshops are held each year in conjunction with the AALL Annual Meeting. AALL members can apply to serve on one of the three AALL policy committees. Many of AALL's chapters have government relations committees and welcome new participants. Interested individuals may also subscribe to AALL's Advocacy Listserv, an open discussion forum that will keep you in the loop on the latest policy news and give you an opportunity to share information about what's happening in your state. We also offer a short Advocacy Team questionnaire to better enable the GRO to target our advocacy efforts. Learn more at: [www.aallnet.org/main-menu/Advocacy/aallwash/advocacyteam](http://www.aallnet.org/main-menu/Advocacy/aallwash/advocacyteam).