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### **The AALL Washington E-Bulletin**

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## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **AALL 2009 *Day on the Hill* Agenda Now Online—Registration Deadline June 15**

Have you registered for the 2009 *Day on the Hill* Advocacy Training and are curious about what your day will entail? Or do you like way “*Day on the Hill*” sounds but aren’t sure what it’s all about? The AALL Government Relations Committee and Government Relations Office are pleased to announce that the [agenda](#) for this special event is now available on AALLNET. The Advocacy Training will take place on Friday, July 24, 2009 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Ballroom West (A) of the Renaissance Marriott in Washington, D.C.

You’ll see from the agenda that we have a busy and fun day planned for our participants. By taking part in the educational morning session, you’ll have time to network with colleagues, learn about AALL’s policy priorities, and hear from one of Washington, D.C.’s most well-respected advocates, “Advocacy Guru” Stephanie Vance. The morning session will prepare you for the afternoon on Capitol Hill, where you’ll meet with your members of Congress or their staffs. If you haven’t yet registered for the *Day on the Hill*, we encourage you to join more than seventy of your colleagues who have already

registered! Please RSVP to AALL Advocacy Communications Assistant [Emily Feldman](#) by June 15.

## **List of Policy Track Programs for July 2009 AALL Annual Meeting Now Available**

We have also recently published a guide to the [Policy Track Programs](#) being held during the 2009 Annual Meeting. It includes a comprehensive list of meetings and events hosted by the Copyright Committee, Electronic Legal Information Access & Citation Committee, Government Relations Committee, and Government Relations Office. By attending these meetings and events, you'll be able to network with your energetic colleagues and learn more about our work. We look forward to seeing you there!

## **UPDATES FROM THE HILL AND THE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS OFFICE**

### **AALL Sends Letter to National Archives on Maintaining Public Access to Presidential Documents**

On April 17, 2009, AALL joined fifteen organizations on a [letter](#) to the Acting Archivist of the United States Adrienne C. Thomas. The letter addresses concerns that we have with a proposal by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) to change the way Presidential records are processed and made available. The letter is in response to a [request for input](#) (RFI) issued by NARA into the development of alternative models for Presidential libraries. The RFI stems from the enactment of the *Presidential Historical Records Preservation Act of 2008* ([PL 110-404](#)), which contains several provisions related to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), Presidential libraries, and the system for archiving Presidential records.

The letter requests that NARA consider the effect any alternative model may have on the public's ability to gain access to important historical documents. We are especially concerned with NARA's suggestion that records be processed systematically rather than under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The letter also urges NARA to consider recommendations from the Public Interest Declassification Board regarding expediting the declassification of presidential records.

We are pleased that NARA [responded](#) on April 21 to one our requests to allow more time for public comment on this important issue. The deadline for comments has been extended to May 22, 2009.

## **AALL Joins Letter to Ask President Obama to Strike Balance with Intellectual Property Policy Positions**

On April 2, 2009, AALL joined a diverse coalition of interest groups, other library associations, and trade associations representing the technology, consumer electronics, and telecommunications industries on a [letter](#) to President Obama to urge him to balance his intellectual property (IP) policy positions. In the letter, we express our concern that several of the president's appointees to positions that oversee the formulation and implementation of IP policy have represented copyright industries, such as the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA). To ensure that future positions reflect the diversity of all stakeholders affected by IP policy, we urge President Obama to create offices in relevant agencies, including at the Patent and Trademark Office, the United States Trade Representative, and the Department of State, whose dedicated role is to promote innovation and advance the cause of progress in the sciences and useful arts so that efforts to protect IP are balanced with the need to promote public discourse and advance innovation.

## **President Obama Names the Chief Technology Officer**

In his [weekly radio address](#) on April 18, 2009, President Obama named Aneesh Chopra as the nation's first Chief Technology Officer (CTO). Chopra is currently serving as the Secretary of Technology of Virginia. He will work closely with Vivek Kundra, the recently-named Federal Chief Information Officer (CIO).

In his January 21, 2009 [Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government](#), the president directed the CTO to develop, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Administrator of General Services, an Open Government Directive to be issued to all executive departments and agencies. The directive should instruct executive departments and agencies to take specific actions to implement the principles set forth in the memo, which include making government more transparent, participatory, and collaborative.

[Kundra](#) discussed the forthcoming directive during last month's [Sunshine Week webcast](#), "Opening Doors: Finding the Keys to Open Government." Other panelists included [Dr. Beth Noveck](#), Professor of Law and Director of the Institute of Information Law and Policy at New York Law School, and Deputy Director for Open Government at the Office of Science and Technology Policy; [Katherine McFate](#), Program Officer for Government Performance and Accountability, Ford Foundation's Governance Unit; and [Dan Chenok](#), a member of President Obama's "Technology, Innovation and Government Reform" transition team.

The open government community has generally welcomed the announcement of Chopra, who has been responsible for Virginia's efforts to harness technology for government reform. We are hopeful that, in addition to encouraging agencies to use innovative technologies to make government information more accessible, Chopra will make certain

that the Open Government Directive is fully executed so as to ensure the basic principles of e-life cycle management.

## **Library 2.0 Symposium Explores the Future of Digital Collections**

On April 4, 2009, AALL Government Relations Office Director Mary Alice Baish spoke at a [symposium](#) hosted by [Yale Law School's Information Society Project](#) on libraries and Web 2.0. She participated in a panel on the "Ethics and Politics of Library 2.0" during which she pointed out some of the innovative technologies the Obama Administration and agencies have used to reach out to the public. She also raised a number of e-life cycle challenges the Administration faces in adopting new social networking tools, such as the ownership, integrity, and preservation of the content. Mary Alice's [slides](#) are available on AALLNET. For all of the speakers' remarks, please visit [Yale Law School's Information Society Project blog](#).

## **CIA Keeps CREST Database for Limited Use at National Archives Facility**

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has come under fire from public interest advocates for its refusal to post online its declassified documents, already available through the CIA Records Search Tool (CREST). 2006 AALL Public Access to Government Information Award Winner Steven Aftergood of the Federation of American Scientists argues that this refusal to allow access to CREST, beyond four computer terminals at the National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) campus in College Park, appears to be at odds with [Executive Order 13292](#). E.O. 13292 states that the Director of the Information Security Oversight Office, in conjunction with those agencies that originate classified information, "should coordinate the linkage and effective utilization of existing agency databases of records that have been declassified and publicly released." Aftergood [says](#), "But by refusing to place the CREST database online (or to release it to others who will do so), the CIA is undermining the "effective utilization" of this existing agency database."

Advocates are cautiously optimistic that President Obama's support for the openness of declassified information will lead to increased availability of these materials online. As described by [Mother Jones magazine](#) during his presidential campaign, Obama [called for](#) the creation of a National Declassification Center, promising to "reverse President Bush's policy of secrecy" and "to make declassification secure but routine, efficient, and cost-effective." We agree with Steven Aftergood that, "... it's a promising approach not just for the CIA, but for all of the major classifying agencies that they should routinely scan documents as they are declassified and make them publicly available. Over time, it would be both cost-effective and enriching to the public domain."

## **Bill to Require Senators to File Reports Electronically Stalls in Senate**

AALL supports a bill to require Senate campaigns to file their campaign finance reports electronically. [Sen. Russ Feingold](#) (D-WI) introduced the *Senate Campaign Disclosure Parity Act* ([S. 482](#)) which would amend the *Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971* (P.L. 92-225) to require Senate candidates to file election-related designations, statements, and

reports in electronic form . “Online Access to Electronic Campaign Disclosures” is ranked seventh in OpenTheGovernment.org and the Center for Democracy & Technology’s new report, “[Show Us the Data: Most Wanted Federal Documents.](#)”

Currently, Senate campaign committees print out paper copies of the forms and turn them in to the Secretary of the Senate, who then delivers them to the Federal Election Commission. Due to the increased processing time of the paper reports, the final disclosure reports of senatorial candidates often become available to the voting public only *after* the elections. In addition to the bi-partisan support in the Senate, the Federal Election Commission (FEC) considers electronic filing of Senate campaign finance reports to be among their top four [legislative priorities](#) for 2009.

## **OUTSIDE THE BELTWAY: CHAPTER NEWS**

If you have news on policy or legislative issues in your AALL Chapter, please [let us know](#). News might address legislation you are tracking, policy-related events your chapter is hosting, or anything you think might be of interest to our community. We’d love to hear from you!

### **CoALL Government Relations Chair Speaks at SWALL Meeting on the Benefits of Creating a Government Relations Committee**

*Submitted by Madeline Kriescher, CoALL and AALL Government Relations Committees*

As the chair of the Government Relations Committee for the Colorado Association of Law Libraries (CoALL), I recently had the pleasure of attending the Southwest Association of Law Libraries (SWALL) annual meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico where I talked about the steps involved in creating a Government Relations Committee (GRC) for state and regional AALL chapters.

SWALL members were enthusiastic about the idea of a chapter Government Relations Committee and they were very receptive to working with me to get a committee started in the next year. The group asked some good questions about the benefits of having a chapter GRC and about what CoALL has done over the past two years. I pointed out that, while CoALL is a fairly small chapter, through our GRC we have been able to voice our concerns about continued funding for libraries and offer a voice of advocacy for library-related issues. We all agreed that it just takes one or two interested and motivated individuals to get the ball rolling and generate chapter interest.

If your chapter doesn't already have a GRC, now would be a great time to consider all of the benefits of starting one. One invaluable resource to help you start a chapter GRC is the [AALL Advocacy Toolkit](#), in which the Government Relations Office explains the steps involved and offers tips to make a GRC more effective.

With many library budgets on the chopping block, who better than a chapter Government Relations Committee to advocate for continued or increased library funding than librarians?

## **LLSDC Announces New Government Relations Committee**

*Submitted by Leslie Street, LLSDC Government Relations Committee Co-Chair*

The Law Librarian Society of Washington, D.C. (LLSDC) is happy to announce the formation of its own GRC. The GRC was formed after a meeting with Mary Alice Baish and Emily Feldman last fall, where the need for local representation on issues both at the federal and the D.C. levels was discussed. The new committee's policies and procedures have been approved and the GRC will be headed by co-chairs Catherine Dunn and Leslie Street. We are currently looking for volunteers, so if you are an LLSDC member interested in joining us, please contact [Catherine Dunn](#) or [Leslie Street](#). For more information on the LLSDC Government Relations Committee, please visit our [new Web site](#).

## **FREE TIME WELL SPENT: Further Reading for the Information Policy Junkie**

### **OMB Watch Reports: Obama Administration at 100 Days**

For more than a year, AALL and many law librarians were actively involved in helping to draft the 21st Century Right to Know Project's seventy recommendations to Congress and President Obama, included in the report, "[Moving Toward a 21st Century Right-to-Know Agenda](#)." To assess how far the Administration has come in addressing these issues in its first 100 days, OMB Watch has issued two reports on the Obama Administration's work on [government transparency](#) and [regulatory reform](#). OMB Watch concludes that while the Administration did not accomplish all of the recommendations included in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century recommendations, the president has made significant progress in both the right-to-know and regulatory areas. In addition to the reports, OMB Watch has put together videos of experts from the right-to-know and regulatory policy fields offering their perspectives on "Obama at 100 Days." The videos are available in the right hand column of [OMB Watch report page](#).

### **New Edition of the Government Printing Office Style Manual Now Available**

The Government Printing Office (GPO) is now distributing copies of the latest edition of the U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual ("GPO Style Manual"), the first revision to the style guide since 2000. The new edition has been redesigned based on a variety of suggestions by users to make it easier to read, and the content has been updated throughout. Copies are being distributed to Members of Congress, Federal agencies and Federal depository libraries. There is also a [free version](#) available online at GPO.

## Web 2.0 Experts Give White House Web site Low Marks

Executive Director of the [Sunlight Foundation](#), Ellen Miller, joined other technology experts in reviewing the White House's Web site in a recent [article](#) in the *National Journal* (via NextGov). Overall, they gave the Web site an average grade of C+. Despite some innovative ideas and "the occasional use of interactive tools," the White House needs to more frequently seek out public comments, according to the reviewers.

## OpenTheGovernment.org and Partners Launch BailoutWatch.net

OpenTheGovernment.org, in coordination with several coalition partners, has launched [BailoutWatch.net](#), a Web site of useful resources such as [news](#), [events](#), [federal reports](#), and an "[Expert Exchange](#)," where knowledgeable individuals write about major issues regarding the bailout and invite to user comments. All of these features and more are available via RSS feed.

## General Services Administration Newsletter on Transparency and Open Government

The [General Services Administration](#) (GSA) has published the [Spring 2009 issue](#) of its [Intergovernmental Solutions Newsletter](#). The theme for this edition is "Transparency and Open Government" and it includes informative articles by federal and state officials, nongovernment organizations, and international organizations.



## April News on the AALL Washington Blawg

- [Recovery.gov to Host Online Dialogue on Improving Transparency of Recovery Funds](#)
- [Senate Judiciary Committee to Hold Business Meeting on State Secrets and FOIA Legislation](#)
- [President Obama Names Chief Technology Officer](#)
- [How to Use the Advocacy Toolkit to Influence Policy at the State Level](#)
- [National Archives Releases Reagan and Bush Presidential Records](#)
- [Center for Responsive Politics Releases Mashable Money-in-Politics Data](#)

To follow the latest posts from the [Washington Blawg](#), you can sign up for the [RSS feed](#) or to receive the Blawg entries via [email](#).

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