



American Association of Law Libraries
MAXIMIZING THE POWER OF THE LAW LIBRARY COMMUNITY SINCE 1906



June 8, 2009

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
United States House of Representatives
102 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0516

Dear Representative Lofgren:

On behalf of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) and the Northern California Association of Law Libraries (NOCALL), thank you for your strong commitment to improve funding for the Law Library of Congress through the introduction of H.R. 2728 last week. AALL and NOCALL strongly support the *William Orton Law Library Improvement and Modernization Act*, and we look forward to working with you to move this important legislation through Congress this year.

We were very saddened by the recent death of Rep. William (Bill) Orton, a staunch champion of the Law Library during his years in Congress and, later, as a member of the ABA Standing Committee on the Law Library of Congress. We applaud you for renaming the bill you introduced last year to honor his memory.

AALL is a nonprofit educational organization with over 5000 members nationwide who respond to the legal information needs of legislators, judges, and other public officials at all levels of government, corporations and small businesses, law professors and students, attorneys and members of the general public. NOCALL is a chapter of AALL, and its 350 members are committed to easy access to legal information and serving the needs of the legal community throughout northern California. Our mission is to promote and enhance the value of law libraries, to foster law librarianship and to provide leadership and advocacy in the field of legal information and information policy.

AALL and NOCALL are strong champions of the Law Library. We have been working closely for many years with the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on the Law Library of Congress to seek ways to improve its funding. We are very grateful for your initial support that led to the October 2007 oversight hearing before the Committee on House Administration during which our Immediate Past President, Ann T. Fessenden, Rep. Bill Orton and Tedson Meyers raised serious concerns about the Law Library's funding.

We are very grateful to you for responding to us and our ABA colleagues by reintroducing this new bill to address these long-standing problems. We believe the authorization of an additional \$3.5 million for the Law Library (Section 2) is crucial so that Law Library's cancelled subscriptions can be renewed, needed treatises can be purchased, and the K reclassification project can be completed at a much faster pace.

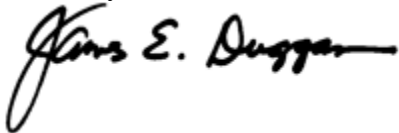
The authorization of the separate line item (Section 3) will bring new transparency and accountability to the annual funding levels requested by the Librarian of Congress for the Law Library. We believe it will allow the Law Librarian to have better control over the library's own budget, decide how the annual appropriations are best spent and, very importantly, be directly accountable to the Congress. We believe an additional benefit will be a higher level of visibility for the Law Library.

The establishment of the "William Orton Law Library Support Program" (Section 4) will allow outside funding to be raised and provided to the Law Library for new enhanced services that are very important to legal researchers and the public. We are very grateful that AALL and the ABA are named as major stakeholders in the new Program. We are equally grateful that the new bill includes language (Section 5) expressing the sense of Congress that the Law Library is, indeed, the Nation's law library. When enacted, H.R. 2728 will put the Law Library in a position to become the first-class library that Congress, legal researchers and members of the public deserve.

AALL and NOCALL commend you for reintroducing this important and much-needed legislation, and for honoring the memory of Rep. Bill Orton who cared deeply about the Law Library and worked tirelessly to improve its funding.

Last but not least, we are excited that AALL's 2009 Annual Meeting will be held in Washington, D.C., from July 25-28. More than 80 AALL members have registered to attend our July 24 "Day on the Hill," including twelve law librarians from California. The Director of AALL's Government Relations Office, Mary Alice Baish, will be working with your staff to set up a brief meeting with you so that we can thank you in person for all your efforts on behalf of the Law Library of Congress.

Sincerely,



James E. Duggan
President
American Association of Law Libraries



Diane M. Rodriguez
President
Northern California Association of Law Libraries