January 18, 2017

Senator Mike Padden, Chair
Senator Steve O’Ban, Vice Chair
Senator Jamie Pedersen, Ranking Minority Member
Senate Law & Justice Committee
455 J.A. Cherberg Bldg., P.O. Box 40466
Olympia, WA 98504-0466

Dear Chair Padden, Vice Chair O’Ban, Ranking Minority Member Pedersen, and Members of the Committee:

I write in support of SB 5039, An act relating to the uniform electronic legal material act (UELMA). The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) thanks you for recognizing the importance of issues related to authentication, preservation, and permanent public access with the introduction of SB 5039.

AALL strongly urges the Committee on Law & Justice to approve SB 5039, which will provide Washington with a technology-neutral, outcomes-based approach to ensuring that online state legal material deemed official will be preserved and made permanently available to the public in unaltered form. SB 5039 covers the most basic primary legal materials including the State Constitution, session laws, Revised Code of Washington, and agency rules.

AALL has been honored to work with the Uniform Law Commission (ULC) in support of UELMA. Many others stakeholders —including the U.S. Government Publishing Office, the National Archives and Records Administration, the Society of American Archivists, the National Center for State Courts, and the Association of Reporters of Judicial Decisions—were observers to the ULC’s UELMA drafting committee.

With the adoption of UELMA, the legal community and members of the public will be able to trust that official online legal information in Washington is accurate and preserved for the future.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Ronald E. Wheeler, Jr.
President
American Association of Law Libraries