November 30, 2011

John Sebert  
Executive Director  
Uniform Law Commission  
111 N. Wabash Ave, Suite 1010  
Chicago, IL 60602

Re: Letter of Support for the Uniform Electronic Legal Material Act

Dear Mr. Sebert:

I am writing on behalf of the American Association of Law Libraries to express the Association’s support for the Uniform Electronic Legal Material Act, which provides to state governments a consistent solution for solving the problems associated with offering official state documents online.

As states begin to utilize technology to promote transparency and citizenship participation by offering public access to state materials online, it is important to ensure that the information offered online is reliable and accurate. In 2007, our Association prepared a report, the State-by-State Report on Authentication of Online Legal Resources, on the subject. The report sought to determine how trustworthy the electronic legal materials offered by the states online were by both traditional authentication definitions and emerging definitions related to online content. The report found that “a significant number of the state online legal resources are official but none are authenticated or afford ready authentication by standard methods.” The Uniform Electronic Legal Material Act provides states with an outcomes-based approach to authentication and preservation of electronic material. The Act also provides a framework for states to preserve legal material in perpetuity in a manner that allows for permanent access.

The Uniform Act is timely and relevant. It will enable end-users, citizens of a state, the ability to verify the trustworthiness of the state legal material available to them online. The American Association of Law Libraries strongly encourages the states to adopt the Uniform Act.

Sincerely,

Darcy Kirk  
President