May 3, 2018

Dr. Carla D. Hayden
Librarian of Congress
Library of Congress
101 Independence Ave SE
Washington, DC 20540


Dear Dr. Hayden:

The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) recently read with great interest the Library’s Special Announcement 18-5 “User-Centered Realignment”. AALL commends you for your leadership in pursuing a forward-looking vision for a more accessible, engaging, and modern Library of Congress. We support your efforts to implement efficiencies within the Library of Congress and understand the realignment necessitates changes to the Library’s organizational structure. We write to respectfully request clarification on how these changes will impact the Law Library of Congress.

The repositioning of the Law Library of Congress from a stand-alone service unit to a subunit under the new Library Collections and Services Group raises several concerns. We seek more information about the role of the new Deputy Librarian, Library Collections and Services Group and how the new Deputy and the realignment more generally will impact the Law Library’s ability to develop its own budget, prioritize initiatives, and maintain its robust collection of primary and secondary sources. We believe it is critical that the Law Librarian have the necessary authority to determine how funds are spent. We seek assurances that the Law Library will maintain custody of its collections, which support the needs of Congress, the courts, federal agencies, attorneys, other law libraries, and the public. We would like to confirm that the Law Librarian will maintain her title and her position on the Library’s Executive Committee, which is important to aligning the Law Library’s priorities with the Library as a whole.

We believe the Law Library will play a vital role in supporting the Library of Congress’s new direction by providing users with ready access to authentic current and historical legal information in print and online. We hope the realignment will not disrupt the Law Library’s ability to meet its mission, which stems from its establishment in 1832 to provide Congress and the Supreme Court with access to current and accurate legal research materials.
Once again, we commend you for charting a new direction for the Library of Congress. Your willingness to take bold steps to pursue your vision to modernize the Library is one of the reasons AALL was pleased to have supported your nomination to become Librarian of Congress. We look forward to hearing from you about how the realignment will impact the Law Library.

Sincerely,

Greg Lambert
President

cc: Mark Sweeney, Acting Deputy Librarian of Congress
    Jane Sánchez, Law Librarian of Congress