



105 West Adams Street, Suite 3300
Chicago, IL 60603
312.939.4764
www.aallnet.org

May 11, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

RE: Request for Economic Relief for Libraries to Address Consequences of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, and Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), an organization representing 4,000 law librarians and legal information professionals across the country, I write to request additional relief for libraries in the next COVID-19 response bill.

AALL appreciates the inclusion of \$50 million for libraries in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. This funding, allocated through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), is being used to help libraries address the urgent need to expand access to internet and other digital services during this pandemic.

AALL recognizes the many competing demands that Congress faces in determining the priorities for the next COVID-19 response measure and we respect the difficult decisions you will need to make. AALL believes that an additional investment in libraries—including law libraries—will generate further economic relief and support access to justice. Therefore, AALL joins the American Library Association to respectfully request \$2 billion for fiscal stabilization for libraries through the IMLS.

Libraries employ hundreds of thousands of people; generate billions of dollars in economic activity; and facilitate workforce recovery, distance learning, and access to essential government and legal information. During the current pandemic, libraries are especially vital community hubs as people facing unemployment apply for jobs and



learn new career skills; small business owners navigate recovery loan programs; and families look for information on legal problems such as foreclosure or eviction.

Unfortunately, the economic effects of COVID-19 have significantly impacted many library budgets, resulting in closures, furloughs, and layoffs. For example, many public libraries and public law libraries are expanding services for their communities while at the same time facing financial uncertainty as their funding sources from state and local budget revenues decline. Additional funding for IMLS will help keep libraries open and staffed, expand economic recovery services, and support greater access to justice.

AALL thanks you for your longstanding commitment to libraries, and we are grateful to the more than 100 bipartisan members of Congress who have already voiced their support for library relief. We appreciate your consideration of AALL's request as you craft the next COVID-19 response legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle Cosby". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michelle Cosby
President