

**Ohio Library Council
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

ITEM NO.: **5.A**

MEETING DATE: **May 15, 2026**

SUBJECT: **ALA Councilor Report**

SUBMITTED BY: **Nick Tepe**

REPORT FOR INFORMATION

ALA Annual Conference

As usual activity is ticking up ahead of Annual Conference as we prepare for any actions needed by Council. I am continuing my work on the Committee on Organization to make the organizational changes needed to implement the actions approved during our winter sessions, particularly in merging the Committee on Professional Ethics and the Intellectual Freedom Committee. My hope continues to be that streamlining these structures will make the organization more efficient and responsive to the challenges we are facing, and lessen the burden on ALA staff as the organization necessarily shrinks.

Other actions I am aware of that are moving forward ahead of Annual include a new [Guidance on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Libraries](#), produced by the [ALA Artificial Intelligence Policy Working Group](#), and a new statement on “[Liberty and the Library](#)” produced by the Intellectual Freedom Committee. I believe both will be very useful to libraries, but the “Liberty and the Library” statement in particular is well worth reading, as it presents the existing principles and documents of the organization in the context of today's censorship efforts, which are broader, more coordinated, and increasingly driven by government actors. IFC is accepting [feedback on the proposed statement](#) through May 28th.

Finally, concerns continue to be expressed by members regarding ALA's financial situation and how the organization is responding to that. While I am also gravely concerned about the organization's finances, I believe that Council and the Executive Board are taking those concerns very seriously and are doing everything we can to work with staff leadership to address the situation while remaining true to our core values and providing value to the membership. If anyone has specific concerns they would like to discuss I strongly encourage you to reach out to me so I can get answers for you.

State of America's Libraries Report

On April 20, the American Library Association (ALA) released its [State of America's Libraries 2026](#) report, an annual snapshot of library trends. As in recent years, the 2026 report documents censorship in libraries from the previous year. In 2025, ALA recorded 713 attempts to censor library materials and services, of which 487 attempts targeted books. This is a decrease from the 821 attempts that were recorded in 2024. However, 4,235 unique titles were banned or challenged at public, school, and university libraries. This figure is second only to the 4,240 unique titles challenged in 2023.

Nearly all of the censorship attempts recorded in 2025—92%—were initiated by pressure groups, government officials, and decision makers. That number has grown sharply in recent years, from 72% in 2024 and 35% in 2023. Fewer than 3% of challenges in 2025 came from individuals.

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According to the report, the most common reasons for book challenges were false claims of illegal obscenity for minors; inclusion of LGBTQIA+ characters or themes; inclusion of topics on race, racism, equity, and social justice; and presenting political or religious views with which the challengers disagreed.

2026 ALA Elections

Tamika Barnes, Associate Dean, Perimeter College Library Services, Georgia State University, has been elected 2026-2027 president-elect of the American Library Association (ALA). Barnes currently serves as the Georgia Library Association (GLA) president. She is also a member of the Freedom to Read Foundation, the Lois Ann Gregory-Ward Fellows Program committee, and the EBSCO Information Services Library Staff Development Award committee. Barnes served on the GLA Executive Board from 2013-2021. Barnes served on the ALA Executive Board from 2018-2021 and ALA Council from 2015-2018 and 2019-2021. She is a member of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and the Black Caucus of ALA. Barnes has served on numerous ALA committees and groups including the Budget and Review Committee (chair 2024-2025), two ALA presidential advisory committees, and the ACRL Conference Experience and Inclusion Committee. Barnes is a 1998 Spectrum Scholar. Full election results can be found [here](#).

ALA settles lawsuit to protect IMLS

ALA has [reached a settlement agreement](#) with the U.S. Department of Justice that protects the Institute of Museum and Library Services and ensures that IMLS will continue carrying out its mission as the only federal agency dedicated to supporting America's libraries.

The agreement resolves the lawsuit filed last year, *ALA v. Sonderling*, which challenged the Trump-Vance administration's attempt to dismantle IMLS through executive action, originating with President Trump's March 2025 Executive Order. Under the settlement, IMLS will continue awarding grants, conducting research, and operating programs that support libraries and museums across the country. The agreement also confirms that previously terminated grants have been reinstated, agency staff reductions have been reversed, and the administration will not take further steps to implement the executive order targeting IMLS.

Combined with the recent news that the Administration [dropped its appeal](#) of *Rhode Island v. Trump* – the separate, parallel case brought by several state Attorneys General challenging the Administration's dismantling of IMLS – all related litigation is now resolved.