

**Ohio Library Council
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

ITEM NO.: **5.C**

MEETING DATE: **Sept. 19, 2025**

SUBJECT: **ALA Councilor Report**

SUBMITTED BY: **Nick Tepe**

REPORT FOR INFORMATION

Council Activity

Council held special meetings on August 27 and September 3 to vote on several items that were time sensitive. First, we approved the new ALA Position Statement Framework that was completed by a task force formed following the 2024 Annual Conference. This was to have been completed for the 2025 Annual Conference, but the task force needed additional time to complete their work. The goal of this framework is to provide a consistent rubric to guide ALA and all units in making or responding to statements. The new framework is adopted on a trial or pilot basis, with any recommended changes to come to Council at the 2026 Annual Conference.

Second, we considered a suite of changes to ALA structure recommended by the Executive Board. These needed to be considered now so that any changes would be able to be implemented in time for the 2026 elections. All of the recommended changes are part of the ongoing efforts to streamline ALA operations, reduce the complexity and confusion surrounding ALA structure, and make the organization more responsive to pressing issues.

Three of the recommendations were uncontroversial: discontinuation of forums and discussion groups as a sub-group of divisions, and aligning all division interest groups as member-based (meaning non-members would not be able to participate in division interest groups). The Executive Board also recommended that Round Table elections be limited to the same positions that are elected for other ALA officers, meaning that the only elected positions for Round Tables would be the Chair-Elect/Coordinator-Elect/President-Elect and Treasurer. While other officers and at-large positions would no longer be elected, the elected officers would be free to appoint any positions necessary to carry out the work of the Round Table. The rationale for this change is that electing the additional positions requires a significant investment of staff time as well as increasing the cost of the election to run, while many of those positions run unopposed or are even vacant. The primary opposition to this change was that academic librarians seeking tenure would not receive as much recognition towards tenure in a non-elected position, as well as some suggesting that the change would be undemocratic. An amendment was successfully added to keep Secretary as an elected position, with the rationale that the Secretary position is essential for the operations of the Round Table. With the amendment, the motion passed. Finally, the Executive Board also recommended that all ALA, division, round table and office publications (including books and journals) be published by ALA Publishing & Media. There were a number of questions about what this would look like in practice, particularly from units who in the past were unable to afford to have their publications printed by ALA Publishing. With reassurances that as part of this change ALA Publishing would be re-evaluating their pricing structures to ensure that all ALA units would be able to afford to use their services, this motion also passed.

Council also heard a preliminary report on the development of an Artificial Intelligence Policy Working Group which is being formed pursuant to a resolution Council passed at the 2025 Annual Conference. The group has an accelerated schedule to complete their recommendations in time for the 2026 Annual Conference, given that the issues around AI continue to grow, and ALA as well as libraries generally need guidance on how to respond to this quickly changing landscape.

Finally, I am continuing my work as part of an Ad-Hoc committee making a recommendation to the Executive Board on how the organization manages the nomination and election of Executive Board members. We expect to make our recommendation to the Executive Board in October so that any needed changes to the Bylaws can go to membership in the 2026 elections. I have also started my term on the Committee on Organization, where I am helping to finish the work of reviewing all ALA committees and making recommendations for any changes to the current structure. Both of these are in keeping with my efforts to carry on the work that was begun with the Standing Committee on Organization Efficiency, Transforming ALA Governance, and other efforts to streamline ALA operations in order to make the organization more nimble and eliminate our operating deficits.

Ongoing Federal Actions

On Sept. 3rd the current Federal Communications Commission Chairman made an [announcement](#) proposing to reverse the FCC's 2024 decision to authorize E-Rate funding for Wi-Fi hotspots checked out by public library patrons for internet access at home. This follows action in Congress where a Congressional Review Act resolution to abolish the hotspots program [passed the Senate](#) in May. The measure has been awaiting action in the U.S. House, where the companion legislation has only two sponsors. ALA issued a [statement](#) supporting the continuation of the approved funding for hotspots through E-Rate.

ALA also led a coalition of leading library, museum, cultural organizations, and a labor union representing cultural workers in filing a [friend-of-the-court brief](#) in *Rhode Island v. Trump*, urging the First Circuit Court of Appeals to uphold an injunction against the administration's attempt to dismantle the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) through an Executive Order. A [statement](#) regarding the filing can be found here.