

# Library Advocacy

INFLUENCING DECISION MAKERS

Illinois Library Association and the American Library Association

## ***INTRODUCTION: LIBRARY ADVOCACY***

This brochure focuses on the need for increasingly more sophisticated legislative advocacy on behalf of libraries and the millions of people who depend on them. It is designed to help library advocates be effective in today's volatile, bottom-line oriented, and complex political environment. The techniques and messages described can be used at the local, state, and national levels.

This is a critical time for library advocacy. Decisions are being made at all levels of government about funding, copyright, telecommunications, intellectual freedom, and other policy issues that will shape libraries and public access to information.

This brochure aims to support library advocates in representing libraries and the public interest at all levels of decision-making and in enlisting the support of legislators who will champion our cause.

### ***Library Advocacy: Influencing Decision Makers***

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## SHAPING THE MESSAGE

Library advocates must adapt to a changed and not always sympathetic political and social environment. Our elected officials need to understand the role of libraries in the 21st century. Key messages include:

- the important federal and state leadership role in library funding;
- the significance of libraries in policy issues ranging from intellectual property to intellectual freedom; and
- the relatively modest amount of federal and state dollars that result in huge national benefits.

### Framing the message

To be effective, library advocates must present themselves as credible with a working knowledge of the political process and their role in it. Library advocates must be able to address library issues in ways that transcend partisan politics, that acknowledge economic realities, and that position libraries as part of the solution to larger problems such as those related to literacy, workforce productivity, and crime.

### Examples:

- Libraries are cultural and economic assets. For example, Illinois' universities, four-year colleges, and community colleges provide opportunities to pursue post-secondary degrees and continuing education for adults at all stages of their lives and careers. Their libraries support these programs and

complement public library services and collections in communities large and small throughout the state. Everyone reaps the economic benefits of our investments both in basic research and scholarship and in an educated and highly-skilled workforce of all ages that can function successfully in a dynamic economy, which continuously requires new skills and knowledge. By freely sharing their collections with one another, libraries preserve and promote our history and culture among students and readers everywhere.

- Libraries are community assets. Libraries are the preeminent self-help organizations. Providing access to information for poor, minority, immigrant, and rural populations is a critical issue. Local libraries are information resource centers for education, employment, and recreation. Whether offering traditional formats, like books and periodicals, or computer-linked databases, libraries serve the whole community.
- Kids are everybody's tomorrow. Children are a bipartisan issue, and much policy debate is centered on the impact that legislation will have on the next generation. Given the choice, most parents would rather have their children actively engaged with the many resources available in a library than watching television or involved in other less productive pastimes. Our role is to help prepare children to live, work, and govern in the 21st century.

# Library Advocacy

## DELIVERING THE MESSAGE

Whether you do it in person, by phone, or by letter, communication is the key to being an effective advocate. An advocacy campaign will likely use all of the following methods.

### Personal visits

Face-to-face discussion is the most effective means of communication. It is essential to establishing a solid working relationship if you and the legislator do not already know each other — and it provides a useful reminder of your existence if you are already acquainted. Schedule a meeting when the governing body is not in session — before pressure builds up. Legislators usually have a district office, or even better, invite them to your library! Visits on the local level will often be more convenient or more productive than in Washington or Springfield. Members of Congress or the General Assembly return to their districts periodically during recesses, on weekends, and between sessions. Check with the district office for a schedule.

Constituents are always welcome, but be sure to make an appointment. Use the district office to make local or Capitol appointments and get to know secretaries, administrative assistants, and other staff. Call the day ahead to confirm your appointment. Keep your delegation — librarian, trustee, alumnus, dean, Friend, or other supporter — small enough (3-4 people) for an easy exchange of views. Leave your card and any background materials, and follow up with a written thank-you and any additional information. Volunteer to help them with their informational needs. How can you help that elected official?

The most important thing in an initial visit is to begin building a base for an enduring relationship. Set three basic goals:

1. Make sure they know who you are and what your library does for their community.
2. Find out which staff members handle library issues and who will be your on-going contact.
3. Convey your interest in their work, and let them know what you want from them on a specific issue or issues.

### Telephone calls

Once you have established a relationship, telephone calls are appropriate and easy. Regular contact with staff is possible and desirable. Keep direct calls to the legislator to a minimum. Gauge how far to push by the reactions you receive. Remember, it is more difficult for a legislator to temporize in a conversation than by letter.

When to call:

- to ask support before a hearing or floor vote
- to ask for help with legislative colleagues
- to convey urgent local concerns

### Letters

Letters are the fuel that power any legislative vehicle. Letters are most effective when used in conjunction with other personal contact. They elicit responses. They represent votes. Each letter-writer is deemed to represent several like-minded, if less highly motivated, constituents.

Letters may be formal or informal, typewritten or handwritten. They should be composed by you, giving reasons for your position and giving the legislator reasons to support it. If you are concerned about a particular bill, cite it by number, sponsor, and its title or subject. The address should read The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_ and the salutation should be Dear Senator or Representative \_\_\_\_\_.

### Telegrams, mailgrams, electronic mail, fax

These are fast, easy ways to communicate with policy makers when the need for action is critical. Use Western Union's nationwide toll-free telephone number: 800-325-6000. Low rates are available. Limit your use of faxes to short, urgent messages and late-breaking information — don't jam the machine.

You can also send messages to Congress or the General Assembly electronically via e-mail. Use e-mail to inform your legislator of special library activities and to voice your views. Unfortunately, not all legislative offices use e-mail regularly; follow up with a letter. If you get a response by e-mail, make note of it and be sure to use this form of communication more frequently.

### The media

Send a message through the media. Legislators monitor their hometown media closely. Letters to the editor and editorials supporting libraries, rallies, and other events that get news coverage are likely to be noticed by the legislator and his/her staff. Be your own clipping service and send copies along with a note. When writing or speaking with the media, it is best not to target or mention a specific legislator in a negative or derogatory manner. Be diplomatic and nonspecific. If a legislator has been helpful, however, please compliment or praise that individual.



# Library Advocacy

## TIPS FOR TALKING WITH LEGISLATORS

*Don't assume elected officials know everything you know about libraries. Tell them what they need to know. Help them understand that libraries are an investment, not an expense. Use facts and figures, but don't overwhelm with statistics. Tell real stories about real people — especially real people and examples from the legislator's hometown or district.*

- Educate and inform. Help them see what libraries mean to their constituents. Invite them to come for a visit to see how libraries have changed and grown — the variety of services, the technology, and the practical advances made by libraries. Point out the indirect benefits of library funding in providing a safe place, community pride, and services for special populations, such as people with disabilities and the elderly. Add your legislator to your newsletter mailing list.
- Make friends where you find them. Keep an open mind. Never overlook a supporter who seems to be out of power, because tomorrow everything could change. Find out everything you can about newly elected officials and any connections they may have to libraries — a spouse or family member who is or who has been a librarian, their involvement with their local library, or the assistance they have received from a library. Try the other way around, too — identify a community with a particularly active or innovative library. Pinpoint the library on a map of the legislative district and make sure the legislator who represents that district knows about it. Individuals in key positions in Congress or the General Assembly have made the difference many times for libraries in the past and will again in the future.
- Get others to help deliver the message. Getting others to deliver your message can be an important strategy. Consider the following list of individuals and groups that legislators might listen to: library trustees, friends and patrons; financial donors and backers; electronic media and the press; colleagues and other office holders; community leaders; deans, alumni, senior administration officers and staff; family, personal friends; staff; voting blocs representing jobs and organized interests; coalitions of organizations; educational and cultural groups; and business groups, chambers of commerce.

## THE LEGISLATIVE VISIT: TIPS FOR SUCCESS

*The key to success is preparation. To be effective, you must present a clear, focused message, one that addresses the needs or concerns of a particular lawmaker at a particular time. Remember, the most important person to any elected official is one from his/her own district who votes and cares enough to speak out about a particular issue.*

### What you should know

- Know *your* legislator.

Which party does he/she belong to? What are some key characteristics of the district he/she represents? What is his/her voting record?

- Know *when* is the best time to schedule visits.

Timing is everything. All legislative bodies have their own legislative cycle. Make a point of knowing when the legislature meets, when key committee hearings are held, when bills are marked up, when debate is scheduled on issues affecting libraries, when the legislator or staff will be most attentive to your message, and when recesses occur. Time your visit accordingly. On the national level, the American Library Association's Washington Office (800-941-8478) can provide the legislative schedule for Congress, and on the state level, the Illinois Library Association (312-644-1896) can provide the legislative schedule for the Illinois General Assembly.

*Note:* The U.S. Congress and Illinois General Assembly generally begin a new session in January and recess around certain key holidays so that members can return to their home districts. For much of the year, most hearings and floor debates are held on a Tuesday-Thursday cycle, although this can change.

- Know *whom* to bring.

Recruit a group of advocates representing the legislator's home district. Be sure to include trustees, Friends, patrons, and other supporters such as board of education members and business people. Unlike library staff, they will not be perceived as acting in their own self-interest.

- Know *how* to make your case.

Make sure everyone understands and agrees on ground rules before the visit. Choose a spokesperson who will lead the discussion, cover all the main points, and steer runaway conversations back to the point. Not every member of the group needs to speak to make a contribution. Expect to be asked tough questions and prepare answers in advance (See Tips for Handling Tough Questions, page 9.)

- Know *why* you're there.

Have a clear agenda. Tell the legislator what specific legislation you want him or her to support. Legislators can't keep track of all pending legislation and when it is scheduled. Make it easy for them to help you.

- Know what you *don't* know.

Practice your presentation with at least one person who is unfamiliar with your issues. They may point out inconsistencies or ask questions about things you've overlooked. This gives you an opportunity to edit your message and answers before the legislative visit.

- Know *what* to bring.

Bring your key policy statement, fact sheets, and other materials that support your position. Keep paper to a minimum — a one-page statement is best.

### Talking the talk

Having a clear, focused message is critical to your success. Make sure that everyone in your legislative delegation supports the message.

- Be clear.

Deliver your key message in 50 words or less — “We're here today to urge you to vote in favor of House Bill xxx. We believe its passage is critical if all children are to learn the technology skills they need.”

- Be specific.

Have facts and figures handy, especially on libraries in the legislator's district. Be prepared to give examples of how his/her constituents do/will benefit. This will demonstrate your credibility to the legislator or staff and add to your self-confidence. Keep this information on pages in a tabbed binder for quick reference.

- Personalize the presentation.

Illustrate your points with examples of local library programs that address specific needs in your community. Share a personal story about how you and your family have benefited from the library. Tell how people in your community are finding jobs and getting health information because of technological innovations. Legislators may be against spending in general, but will respond to particular programs.

- Keep your presentation brief.

Resist the temptation to tell the legislator everything you know. Be prepared to answer questions. Have back-up points ready in case there is more time.

- Know your priorities.

Choose four or five points that are most important. Begin with the highest priority, in case the meeting is interrupted.

- Put it in writing.

Bring an outline of your presentation and leave it with the legislator/staff. Attach your card and write the date and purpose of your visit on the back.

- Put it in context.

Connect your message to other important issues — literacy training, crime prevention, a technologically-skilled workforce. Use this opportunity to position libraries as a broad-based community resource.

### Rules for successful visits

- Be on time.

Legislators' schedules are hectic. Appointments are scheduled at frequent intervals — as often as every quarter of an hour. If you miss your window, you will not only lose the chance to talk, but send the wrong message.

- Be a constituent.

Introduce yourself and identify your hometown. If you bring a group, wear name tags. Bring a representative or carry a personal message about the library in the legislator's hometown or community.

- Look the part.

It may be a long day of visits and you need to be alert and look fresh for each one. Dress comfortably and professionally.

- Be positive.

Choose representatives who genuinely value the political process. Most legislators and staff are hard-working, whether or not they agree with you on the issues. Don't convey negative attitudes about politics or politicians.

- Stay focused.

It's easy to chat about mutual acquaintances, your trip to Washington or Springfield, or the weather, and find your time has suddenly disappeared. Don't allow yourself to be distracted. On the other hand, if a legislator shows a real interest in a particular issue, don't cut him/her off just to make it through your list.

- Remain calm — no matter what.

Don't let yourself be put on the defensive. If a legislator asks difficult questions about an issue such as freedom of information in libraries, try saying, "This is an important issue — could I quickly run through the rest of these points and then come back to this so that we can discuss it more fully? We'd like to get your point of view." Most legislators will accept this approach. If he or she insists on proceeding, repeat your message, and encourage the legislator or staff to read the written materials you brought. Be positive, diplomatic, and understanding of his or her point of view.

- Don't get discouraged.

If the legislator is called away and a staff member takes over the meeting, use the opportunity to become better acquainted. Staff often have considerable influence. They generally write public statements and participate in formulating the legislator's policy positions. A staff member can be your ambassador, too.

- Know when to stop.

Keep your presentation to the point. Be polite and persistent, but don't overstay your welcome.

- Be appreciative.

Express your thanks for past support, as well as asking for help with current issues.

### **Feedback and follow up**

- Say thank you.

Write a thank you letter as soon as you return home. Include a personal memory about the meeting and enclose additional information to drive home your point.

- Share information.

Report on the visit to other library advocates to share information and learn from each other. Remember to send ILA a note of your visit and any valuable information that you learn.

- Get connected.

Coordinate your efforts with ALA and ILA.

Subscribe to the ALA Library Advocacy Now! discussion list and ILA discussion list. To subscribe to the Illinois Library Association discussion list, send a message to: [majordomo@darkstar.rsa.lib.il.us](mailto:majordomo@darkstar.rsa.lib.il.us). Leave the subject line blank. In the message text, type "subscribe Legisnet-IL" followed by your e-mail address. You will receive a welcome message to the discussion list when the subscription has been accepted. You can also post information or pose a question to the recipients of the list by sending a message to [legisnet-il@darkstar.rsa.lib.il.us](mailto:legisnet-il@darkstar.rsa.lib.il.us). Any message that is posted will go to all the discussion list subscribers.

- Remain informed.

Check out the ILA Web site ([www.ila.org](http://www.ila.org)).

The association posts and regularly updates the following information on bills of interest to the library community: bill number, sponsor, description, status, and ILA's position.

- Stay in touch.

Look for ways to keep in touch with individual legislators. Keep writing letters. Inform them about developments at local libraries. Let them know about National Library Week events. And, of course, keep them up to date on pending library legislation.



## TIPS FOR HANDLING TOUGH QUESTIONS

*It's important to remain calm and in control at all times if you are to be a credible spokesperson with legislators, reporters, or public audiences.*

**In general, it is best to keep your answers simple, positive, and to the point. More tips:**

- 1. Practice.** You can anticipate most questions. Role play your answers to “tough” questions with a colleague. Don’t try to memorize answers, but focus on developing a technique that will allow you to be comfortable and confident, no matter what the question.
- 2. Listen.** Make sure you hear the question that is being asked. Respect the questioner.
- 3. Pause.** Think about your answer. This isn’t being hesitant. It shows you are taking the question seriously.
- 4. Don’t be defensive.** Stay upbeat, positive — “Libraries are vital to democracy. We are very proud of the service our library provides.” If someone makes a false statement, respectfully but firmly respond: “That’s absolutely incorrect. The truth is the vast majority of parents find the library an extremely friendly, safe place for their children. We receive many more compliments from parents than we do complaints.”
- 5. Be direct.** Respond to the question that is asked, but focus your answer on the message you want to deliver.
- 6. Remember, a longer answer is not necessarily a better answer.** Try to answer in three sentences. If a legislator asks, “Well, what should I cut to fund libraries?,” don’t make a recommendation. Simply say, “That’s your decision, not mine. And I appreciate how difficult that is.”
- 7. Do not repeat negative words.** Keep your answers positive and to the point.
- 8. Respond honestly.** If you don’t know the answer, don’t be afraid to say so. Say you will get more information and get back to the legislator or his/her staff.
- 9. Remember, libraries are **family-oriented** public institutions** charged with making a broad selection of materials available for everyone, including children and teenagers. Most public libraries have special areas for children and teens with materials that appeal to various ages and interests. Libraries also offer summer reading programs, storytelling, book discussions, and other special programs for young people. Programs such as these help kids learn to enjoy libraries and use them for their information and entertainment needs.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

You may not be asked these exact questions, but they cover the types of topics and concerns you can expect. The answers are only examples of how you might respond. Your own answers should reflect your own experiences and draw on local examples. Practicing these techniques and examples will help you stick to your message and feel comfortable when presenting it to legislators.

Keep it simple and avoid jargon.

### **Question:**

Are people really using the Internet at the library? What are they using it for?

### **Answer:**

Our library is connected to the state job information network and dozens of people use it everyday to match their skills with job openings.

We offer training classes on how to use the Internet and we always have more people sign up than we can handle. High school students use the Internet at the library to find out about colleges and how to apply for financial aid. In rural areas, the Internet is a particularly rich resource. It provides access to the world and enables even the smallest library to be part of that rich resource. These are just a few examples of how our library is helping people prepare for the future.

### **Question:**

How can children be protected from inappropriate material on the Internet?

### **Answer:**

The best way is for parents to guide their children's use of the library and other resources. We encourage parents to come to the library and explore cyberspace with their children. The Internet offers many fascinating opportunities for fun and learning that parents and children can enjoy together. It's important for parents to guide their children's Internet use the same way they supervise their children's reading and television viewing. We also display and distribute copies of "The Cyberguide for Kids and Parents," which directs children to 100+ wholesome Web sites. Our computers are equipped with Cybersigns, which lead kids to cool Web sites.

### **Question:**

Why do we need libraries when everyone can get all the information they need from computers in their offices and homes?

### **Answer:**

Electronic information represents only a fraction of what is available in print. While the Web can be wonderful and an immediate source of information, its very immediacy inherently makes it a less stable and less constant resource than printed materials. It is also very costly. Due to this high cost, libraries are even more essential as shared resources, delivering information in both print and electronic formats. Also, there are many Americans who do not have access to a computer, either because they can't afford one or don't know how to use one. Without libraries, we will increasingly become a nation of the information-rich and the information-poor. Libraries not only offer access to computer equipment to all individuals, but also provide the services of expert information navigators — librarians. Having a world of information at your fingertips is only beneficial when the appropriate information can be located swiftly and efficiently. Librarians are trained professionals who can help you locate information quickly and easily.

### **Question:**

Tax dollars support the library. Why shouldn't we be able to control what our kids are exposed to?

### **Answer:**

You can control what your children are exposed to simply by going with them to visit the library or supervising what they bring home. The library has the responsibility to serve all taxpayers, including those you may not agree with — or those who may not agree with you. We believe parents know what's best for their children, and each parent is responsible for supervising his or her child.

### **Question:**

What can parents do to protect their children from materials they consider dangerous?

### **Answer:**

Visit the library with your children. If that's not possible, ask to see the materials your children bring home. Set aside a special shelf for library materials. If there are materials on it you don't approve of, talk with your children about why you would rather they not read or view them. Most libraries provide suggested reading lists for various ages.

And librarians are always glad to advise children and parents on selecting materials we think they would enjoy and find helpful.

## WINNING LIBRARY CHAMPIONS

Don't stop once you've established contact with a legislator. This is a marathon, not a sprint. Turning legislators into library champions takes more than a single visit. Make time to develop a relationship — one based on trust, respect, and positive feelings. Most legislators welcome opportunities to meet and get to know the people they represent. They also like to look good in the eyes of their constituents. Anything you do to help will be appreciated — and remembered.

### What you can do

- Recognize officials for their contributions by presenting them with a special award from the library board or Friends of Libraries. Send a photo to the local or campus newspaper. Also, post on the library bulletin board.
- Provide them with photo opportunities. Invite them to read stories to children at your school or library. Publish photos in the library or school newsletter. Alert local news media.
- Invite legislators to hold meetings or a “constituent hour” in the local library.
- Stage a demonstration of new information technology at the library so officials can see how their constituents are benefiting — or, what they are missing.
- Invite legislators to speak at a library dedication or anniversary, National Library Week open house, and other special events.
- Have students take legislators on a tour of the school or campus library. Hold a question and answer session with students. Make sure the school newspaper covers it. Also invite community media.
- Meet with state and federal legislators in their district offices, as well as at the Capitol. Take every opportunity to let them know about library issues.
- Get to know legislative staff members, especially those with responsibilities for committees that focus on library issues and funding.

Stop by to say hello or leave a message when you are in the area, even if you don't have an official appointment.

## HELPFUL STATISTICS

The right statistics can be a powerful reinforcement for your message. Too many statistics can overpower it. Statistics can also become dated. The following national and state examples are here for illustrative purposes. When speaking, make sure that you have the latest statistics from ALA, ILA, the Illinois State Library, the Illinois School Library Media Association, and your Illinois library system. You will also want to make a list of key statistics for your library.

### Support for Libraries

In 1998, Illinois public libraries reported total funding of \$516 million from the following sources:

Local government .....	84%
State .....	7%
Federal .....	1%
Other.....	8%
(donations, fines, fees, grants, etc.)	

Americans support libraries at the polls, voting “yes” for 79 percent of library capital referenda. (1987-1998)

Forty million books and nearly one million videos and films are available through Illinois libraries.

### Kids and Libraries

An estimated 37 percent of public library visitors are children.

Almost half of children ages 3 to 8 visit a library each month.

Some 86 percent of public libraries offer preschool storyhour and other programs for preschool and kindergarten age children.

More than 80 percent of adults responding to a Gallup Poll believe it is very important that the public library be a “discovery and learning center” for preschool children.

More than 42 million children, their parents, and caregivers attend library programs each year.

More children participate in summer reading programs at libraries than play Little League baseball.

### School Libraries

There are approximately 98,311 school library media centers — 77,218 in public schools and 20,951 in private schools.

Research has shown that the highest achieving students come from schools with good library media centers.

Most school library media centers spend less than \$7 a year per child on books — about half the average cost of one hardcover book.

Students visit school library media centers some 2.3 billion times during the school year — more than twice the number of visits to state and national parks.

There are nearly 2 million students in Illinois' 908 public school districts. Ninety-one percent have access to a school library media center. Unfortunately, 33 percent of Illinois schools do not have a library or media specialist. Of the schools that do have library staff, 32 percent are not certified as librarians or teachers.

A study by the Illinois State Board of Education and the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory found that the annual budgets for almost 60 percent of the school libraries in Illinois did not exceed \$5,000 each. The average spent on school libraries was \$8,600.

Americans spend five times as much on home video games (\$5.8 billion) as they do on school library materials for their children.

### Public libraries

Despite super bookstores, video stores, health clubs, and home computers vying for attention, Americans continue to use their public libraries in record numbers, according to a 1998 poll conducted by the Gallup Organization.

There are more public libraries — a total of 16,047, including branches — than McDonald's restaurants.

Americans check out more than 1.6 billion items from libraries each year, an average of 6.5 items per capita. In Illinois, 80.7 million items were borrowed from public libraries.

Americans make more than a billion visits to libraries each year. Illinois residents make 55 million visits to public libraries annually.

More than 6 of 10 adults (66 percent) use a public library at least once a year.

About 81 percent of library users check out books. More than half (52 percent) use computers to obtain information they need. In Illinois, reference librarians answer 16 million questions each year; 37 percent of the inquiries are from children.

A poll conducted by the Gallup Organization found 90 percent of the public said libraries will continue to be a necessary service despite the growing availability of information through computers.

Illinois rural residents check out almost twice as many books as those living in urban areas.

Illinois public libraries are funded at less than \$50 per capita; the Illinois Department of Corrections budgets \$17,400 per inmate.

In 1998, 597 Illinois public libraries spent more than \$3 million for information in electronic format.

Americans spend more on potato chips and snack foods (\$5.2 billion) than on public libraries.

### **Academic Libraries**

Academic librarians answer 112 million reference questions each year — more than three times the attendance at college football games.

Academic libraries receive only 3 cents of every dollar spent on higher education.

According to the Association of Research Libraries, two of the top U.S. libraries in terms of size of collections are here in Illinois — University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is ranked number three in total volumes and the University of Chicago is eleventh in total volumes.

### **Libraries and Technology**

In 1999, the World Wide Web had about 3.6 million sites, of which 2.2 million were publicly accessible. Findings indicate that adult content claims a small proportion of the Web. About two percent of the public sites — 42,000 of the 2.2 million — contain sexually explicit material.

Nationally, more than 71 percent of public libraries serving populations of 100,000 or more have computers for public use. In Illinois, 90 percent of all public libraries offer direct public access to the Internet.

More than 94 percent of academic libraries are connected to the Internet.

Computers and modems are in 80 percent of Illinois secondary school libraries and 50 percent of elementary school libraries. However, access is not equal in that many of these have only one computer with a modem and software capable of accessing the Internet. Only more affluent districts have multiple, high-speed connections available.

# Library Advocacy

## RESOURCES

### Online

#### **ALA Advocacy Now! (ALADNOW).**

Discussion list of the ALA Library Advocacy Network for idea sharing, updates, and legislative alerts. To subscribe, send the message "subscribe aladnow your first and last name" to listproc@ala.org.

#### **ALA Washington Newslines (ALAWON).**

Online newsletter from the ALA Washington Office, offering timely updates and action alerts on federal legislation and policies regarding libraries and information issues.

Available free of charge over the Internet. To subscribe, send the message "subscribe ala-wo your first and last name" to listproc@ala.org.

#### **ALA Web Page (<http://www.ala.org>).**

See the ALA Washington Office and Office of Information Technology Policy for policy statements and background on key issues.

### ILA Advocacy.

Discussion list of the ILA Library Advocacy Network for idea sharing, updates, and legislative alerts.

To subscribe, send a message to:

**majordomo@darkstar.rsa.lib.il.us.**

Leave the subject line blank. In the message text, type "subscribe Legisnet-IL" followed by your e-mail address. You will receive a welcome message when the subscription has been accepted. You can also post information or pose a question to the recipients of the list by sending a message to:

**legisnet-il@darkstar.rsa.lib.il.us.**

Any message that is posted will go to all subscribers.

#### **ILA Web Page (<http://www.ila.org>).**

The association posts and regularly updates the following information on bills of interest to the library community: bill number, sponsor, description, status, and ILA's position. The Web site also provides access to the *ILA Reporter*, ILA conference information, Jobline, and many other useful resources.

### Publications

#### **ALA Washington Office Newsletter:**

A sporadic publication of the ALA Washington Office, with timely updates on federal legislation and policies regarding libraries and information issues.

Cost: \$35/yr. Contact the ALA Washington Office, 1301 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Suite 403, Washington, DC 20004; phone: 202-628-8410; fax: 202-628-8419; e-mail: alawash@alawash.org.

**Costabile, Mary.** "How to Recruit a Library Champion," *American Libraries*, December 1996, page 42.

**Craft, Mary Anne.** *The Funding Game — Rules for Public Library Advocacy*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Pr. & Neal-Schuman Publishers, 1999. Cost \$35. In order to keep libraries growing, thriving, and performing as viable and essential community players, library advocates must play what author Mary Anne Craft calls "the funding game." Craft presents various examples of library advocacy and cites a variety of community inputs so that library administrators, board members, and friends will have better insight into possibilities for their own library's funding advantage.

**Doyle, Robert P., ed.** *Illinois Libraries Today: Libraries Build Community*. Chicago: Illinois Library Association, 2000. Cost: \$35 for 100 brochures. Presents a narrative and statistical glimpse of Illinois libraries, their achievements, and concerns.

**Doyle, Robert P., ed.** *Cyberguide for Kids and Parents, Third Edition, 1999*. Chicago: Illinois Library Association, 1999. Cost: \$35 for 100 brochures. This excellent tool can be used by all library advocates with key constituents, such as legislators, to demonstrate the responsiveness of the Illinois library community in helping families navigate cyberspace responsibly.

**Fast Facts: Recent Statistics from the Library Research Service.** A sporadic newsletter. Free. Contact the State Library of Colorado, Library Research Service, 201 E. Colfax Ave., Room 309, Denver, CO 80203; phone: 303-866-6737; fax: 303-866-6940; e-mail: klance@sni.net; <http://www.lrs.org>.

**Herold, Irene, Rebecca Hultgren, and Sue Cleary.** "Effective Connections with Elected Officials: How to Contact Them, What to Expect, and How to Benefit — Three Perspectives," *Illinois Libraries* 80 (Winter 1998): 22-26. A congressional staffer, a former lobbyist and current public library trustee, and a documents librarian all address the topic of how to communicate effectively with elected officials.

***Library Advocate's Handbook.***

Cost \$2; quantity discounts available. ALA Public Information Office, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611; phone: 800-545-2433, extension 5041/5044; fax: 312-944-8520; e-mail: pio@ala.org.

**Reed, Sally G. *Saving Your Library:***

***A Guide to Getting, Using and Keeping the Power You Need.*** Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Co., 1992. \$26.50 plus \$4 shipping and handling. McFarland and Co., Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640; phone: 336-246-4460; fax: 336-246-5018.

***Serving Our Public: Standards for Illinois Public Libraries, Revised Edition 1997.*** Chicago: Illinois Library Association, 1997. Cost: \$13 for the first copy and \$11.50 for additional copies. The standards help people who govern, administer, and staff the public libraries of Illinois develop and maintain high quality library service in their communities.

**Shaw, Jane Belon, H. Neil Kelley, and Robert P. Doyle, eds. *Trustee Facts File, Second Edition.***

Chicago: Illinois State Library and Illinois Library Association, 1997. Cost: ILA Member, \$12.00; Nonmember, \$15.00. Provides a broad overview of the duties, responsibilities, and tasks of the public library trustee. An ideal component of a trustee orientation and education program, this quick reference tool is written by experienced and knowledgeable Illinois trustees and library directors.

**Turner, Ann. *Getting Political: An Action Guide for Librarians and Library Supporters.*** New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 1997. Cost: \$45.00. Step-by-step guidance on evaluating the local political structure, galvanizing public support, and using aggressive political action to influence decision-making about libraries. Neal-Schuman Publishers, 100 Varick St., New York, NY 10013; phone: 212-925-8650; fax: 800-584-2414.

**Videos**

***Controlling the Confrontation, 1989.***

Techniques for defusing confrontations and delivering convincing messages. (44 min.) Cost: \$99 (includes discussion guide). ALA members receive a 10 percent discount. Order from ALA Video/Library Video Network, 320 York Rd., Towson, MD 21204-5179; phone: 800-441-TAPE (8273); fax: 410-887-2091.

***Library Advocacy Now, 1996.***

Librarians, library staff members, board members, and trustees must be library advocates. This tape shows how to do it. (25 min). Cost: \$99. ALA members receive a 10 percent discount. Order from ALA Video/Library Video Network, 320 York Rd., Towson, MD 21204-5179; phone: 800-441-TAPE (8273); fax: 410-887-2091.

***Perfecting Presentations, 1992.***

How to deliver an interesting, enjoyable, and memorable presentation. (37 min.) Cost: \$150 (includes book "Podium Power"). ALA members receive a 10 percent discount. Order from ALA Video/Library Video Network, 320 York Rd., Towson, MD 21204-5179; phone: 800-441-TAPE (8273); fax: 410-887-2091.

***Testify with Impact, 1994.***

How to communicate effectively with government bodies, the media, and other audiences. (41 min.) Cost: \$150 (includes book). ALA members receive a 10 percent discount. Order from ALA Video/Library Video Network, 320 York Rd., Towson, MD 21204-5179; phone: 800-441-TAPE (8273); fax: 410-887-2091.



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Legislative advocacy is best done on the local level!

Invite your local elected officials to your library. Introduce them to your staff, trustees, and patrons.

Explain all your services and demonstrate exceptional resources and new technology.

Invite them to your programs like story hour or your summer reading program. Better yet, create an event and include them.

Look for opportunities to get positive publicity and to support local officials for their efforts.

Establish a long-term relationship with public officials. Then, when you contact them, they will know you and the services you provide. They are more likely to respect what you do and be willing to help.

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