



American Association of Law Libraries
MAXIMIZING THE POWER OF THE LAW LIBRARY COMMUNITY SINCE 1906

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

We Hope to See Many of You Here in D.C.!

With the AALL Annual Meeting approaching in just a few weeks, the Government Relations Office (GRO) is eagerly preparing to welcome AALL members to Washington, D.C. Each year, we put together a [Policy Track Programs Guide](#) that includes a list of meetings and events held by the GRO and AALL's policy committees. The events listed in the guide include meetings and events hosted by the Government Relations Office, Government Relations Committee (GRC), Copyright Committee, and Electronic Legal Information Access & Citation (ELIAC) Committee. This year, we are thrilled to have many exciting events and meetings planned for AALL members.

To kick off the Annual Meeting, 75 AALL members will participate in our full-day Advocacy Training, AALL's 2009 [Day on the Hill](#). Participants will learn insider tips from "Advocacy Guru" Stephanie Vance and spend the afternoon visiting their senators and representatives on Capitol Hill to discuss some of AALL's core policy priorities. This year's D.C. *Day on the Hill* promises to be busy, fun, and highly rewarding for our participants, and we are gratified that so many of you will be joining us!

Our policy committee meetings are open to everyone and we hope to see many of you there!

Electronic Legal Information Access & Citation (ELIAC) Committee Meeting

Sunday, July 26, 2009 ▪ 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM
Renaissance-Room 18

Government Relations Committee Meeting

Monday, July 27, 2009 ▪ 12:00 PM - 1:15 PM
WCC-Room 144 C

Copyright Committee Meeting

Monday, July 27, 2009 ▪ 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM
WCC-Room 159 A

Chapter Leadership Roundtable: Government Relations

Monday, July 27, 2009 ▪ 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM
WCC-Room 159 B

Government Relations Committee Offers New State Bill Tracking Resource

The AALL Government Relations Committee posted a [new page](#) on their Web site to help you track legislation in your state. The new bill tracking chart includes the dates of state legislative sessions and links to free resources to help you follow legislation in your state. Please check the page to see if your state is listed; so far, 26 states are included. If your state is not listed and you know of free bill tracking resources, please [send a note](#) to the AALL Advocacy Listserv ([subscribe here](#)).

UPDATES FROM THE HILL AND THE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS OFFICE

New Legislation Would Increase Funding for Law Library of Congress

On June 4, 2009, Representatives [Zoe Lofgren](#) (D-CA-16) and [Daniel Lungren](#) (R-CA-3) introduced the *William Orton Law Library Improvement and Modernization Act* ([H.R. 2728](#)). The legislation is similar to [last year's bill](#) to provide increased funding for the Law Library of Congress but has been renamed to honor the late Rep. William Orton. Rep. Orton was a long-time friend of AALL and had been a great champion of the Law Library in his capacity as a member of the American Bar Association (ABA) Standing Committee on the Law Library of Congress.

The legislation, as introduced, includes the following provisions:

- Sec. 2 authorizes a one-time additional appropriation of \$3.5 million for the Law Library of Congress, some of which is to catalog the huge backlog of volumes in to the K classification system;
- Sec. 3 authorizes the Librarian of Congress to include a separate line item for the Salaries and Expenses of the Law Library in his annual budget request, effective FY 2011;
- Sec. 4 establishes the “William Orton Law Library Support Program” that will allow the ABA to move forward on their fundraising efforts under the current Library of Congress Trust Fund Board; and,
- Sec. 5 includes “Sense of Congress” language directing the Librarian of Congress to finance and operate the Law Library of Congress “as the Nation’s law library.”

The [Committee on House Administration](#) held a mark-up on the bill on June 8. At the mark-up, Rep. Lofgren introduced, and the committee unanimously approved, an amendment to Section 5 officially designating the Law Library of Congress as the “National Law Library”. We applaud the bill as favorably reported out of committee and are grateful to Rep. Lofgren for introducing this important amendment.

On June 7, AALL President James E. Duggan and Northern California Association of Law Libraries (NOCALL) President Diane M. Rodriguez wrote a [joint letter](#) to Rep. Lofgren thanking her for her strong commitment to improve funding for the Law Library of Congress. Rep. Lofgren graciously noted the letter during the mark-up and submitted it into the record.

House Passes Legislative Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2010

On June 19, 2009, the House passed the FY 2010 Legislative Branch appropriations bill ([H.R. 2918](#)) by a vote of [232-178](#). Overall, the bill allows for a 7 percent increase over FY 2009. The Senate Appropriations Committee also reported its version of the Legislative Branch appropriations bill favorably. We were extremely pleased that the bills included full funding for Salaries and Expenses and FDsys. Unfortunately, the Senate bill stalled before reaching the floor due to objections from several Republican senators, led by Sen. David Vitter (R-LA).

On May 5, 2009, Government Relations Office Director Mary Alice Baish testified [[written testimony](#); [oral testimony](#)] at the public witness hearing held by the House Appropriations Committee Legislative Branch Subcommittee. Her testimony articulated AALL’s support of the GPO FY 2010 budget request. In her testimony, Mary Alice urged the committee to support GPO’s FY 2010 request of \$8 million for the future development of FDsys.

Government Relations Office Posts New Issue Brief on Whistleblower Protections

The Government Relations Office and Government Relations Committee produced a new [issue brief](#) this month on whistleblower protections. Government whistleblowers risk their jobs to speak out about problems at their agencies in order to protect against waste, fraud, and abuse. This issue brief explains why AALL supports expanding protections for government whistleblowers and the status of current legislation, including the *Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2009* ([H.R. 1507](#)). AALL strongly supports H.R. 1507, which would provide government whistleblowers with the right to a jury trial in federal court and expand coverage of national security employees.

White House Keeps Visitor Logs Under Wraps

As we [reported recently on the Blawg](#), the Obama Administration followed the secretive steps of the Bush Administration this month when it rejected requests to release White House visitor logs to the public. In response, [Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in](#)

[Washington \(CREW\)](#) filed a [complaint](#) against the Department of Homeland Security based on the Secret Service's refusal to provide CREW with White House visitor records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Last year, U.S. District Court Judge Royce Lamberth [ruled](#) that the visitor records are agency, not presidential, records that must be disclosed under FOIA. [According to the Washington Post](#), White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said the Obama Administration is reviewing its policy regarding the release of logs.

AALL is disappointed with the White House's decision to keep these logs out of public view, and we will continue to press President Obama to meet his promise to create a more transparent and accountable government.

President Obama Alters Pledge to Post Bills Online

In January 2009, we reported in the [E-Bulletin](#) that President Obama broke his pledge to publish all non-emergency legislation to the White House Web site for five days for public comment with the signing of *The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009* (P.L. 111-2). Acknowledging that this promise was easier said than done, the White House has changed its policy about public comments. Administration officials now say they will post the bills even earlier in the process, although the White House did not provide details of when bills would actually be posted. [According to the New York Times](#), Nick Shapiro, a White House spokesperson, said, "Once it is clear that a bill will be coming to the president's desk, the White House will post the bill online."

In another effort to increase congressional transparency, AALL supports a House effort that would require Congress to take time to "read the bill." Reps. [Brian Baird](#) (D-WA-3) and [John Culberson](#) (R-TX-7) recently introduced a resolution ([H. Res. 554](#)) to require the House to post online all non-emergency legislation 72 hours before debate begins. This is an important effort to increase legislative transparency which we strongly support. For more information, see <http://readthebill.org/>.

Declassification Board Launches Blog Series on Classification Policies

As we reported in the [May edition](#) of the *E-Bulletin*, President Obama last issued a [Memorandum on Classified Information and Controlled Unclassified Information](#) on May 27, 2009 in which he calls for a review of policies which lead to the overclassification of information and immediate action to rein in Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) designations. In his memo, President Obama calls for a review of [Executive Order 12958](#), "Classified National Security Information", as amended.

In response, the Public Interest Declassification Board (PIDB), an advisory board whose members are appointed by Congress and the President, launched a series of [blog posts](#) on the [Office of Science and Technology Blog](#) to solicit recommendations for revisions to the Order in four key areas: declassification, creation of a National Declassification Center, classification, and technology challenges and opportunities. The blog posts kicked off on June 28 with a [post](#) asking for recommendations on declassification policy.

The blog will be open for comments until Friday July 10, 2009. In addition, the PIDB [will hold a public meeting](#) in D.C. on Wednesday, July 8, to solicit input concerning recommendations and proposed revisions to the classification and declassification policies found in Executive Order 12958.

Miriam Nisbet Named Director of New FOIA Office

On June 10, 2009, Acting Archivist of the United States Adrienne Thomas announced the appointment of Miriam Nisbet as the director of the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS). OGIS was established under the *OPEN Government Act of 2007* (P.L. 110-175) to review agency compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and offer mediation services to requestors. AALL was a strong proponent of the *OPEN Government Act* for many years and applauded the enactment of this important transparency law in December 2007.

Ms. Nisbet will be charged with reviewing policies and procedures of administrative agencies under the FOIA; reviewing compliance with FOIA by administrative agencies; recommending policy changes to Congress and the President to improve the administration of FOIA; and offering mediation services to resolve disputes between persons making FOIA requests and administrative agencies.

Long a friend of libraries, Ms. Nisbet has been Director of the Information Society Division of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) since 2007. Previously, she was the legislative counsel at the American Library Association for several years after serving as Special Counsel for Information Policy at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) from 1994 to 1999.

In a [press release](#) issued by NARA, Ms. Nisbet said, "I am tremendously excited about the opportunity to be part of a new office and a new approach to make the Freedom of Information Act work better, for the requestors who seek access to records and for the federal officials who administer the law." We extend our congratulations to Ms. Nisbet!

OUTSIDE THE BELTWAY: CHAPTER NEWS

Our thanks to Anne Bernardo of the Council of California County Law Librarians (CCCLL), Kathy Carlson of the AALL Electronic Legal Information Access and Citation Committee (ELIACC), and Tina Jagerson of the San Diego Area Law Libraries (SANDALL) Government Relations Committee for submitting very timely and interesting updates from their states this month.

We encourage and welcome other policy-related items from *your* state. Please [email chapter news](#) to AALL Advocacy Communications Assistant Emily Feldman. Thanks, and we look forward to hearing from you!

California County Law Librarians Propose Updates to County Law Library Code Sections

-Submitted by Anne R. Bernardo, Chair, CCCLL Legislative Committee

The Council of California County Law Librarians (CCCLL) is pursuing state legislation to update and modernize various county law library code sections in California Business and Professions Code sections 6300 et seq. The Senate Local Government Committee recently amended its Omnibus Bill of 2009, Senate Bill 113, to include the [nineteen sections](#) proposed by CCCLL. .

The omnibus bill is a consensus bill and, as such, all provisions included can have no opposition. The Committee's motto is in fact, "If it isn't consensus, it isn't omnibus." Before the Committee accepts the proposal, it is first submitted through a very thorough vetting process. CCCLL pre-vetted its amendments with thirteen related stakeholders, including the Administrative Office of the Courts, California State Association of Counties, and the California Library Association. Once that was completed, then the Committee vetted the proposal with over a hundred other government related organizations. Any objection to any provision had to be resolved or it would be removed. CCCLL's lobbyist was instrumental in moving our proposal through the process and keeping it on track. We agreed to several changes recommended by other entities, and all amendments were included in the bill.

The Assembly Local Government Committee is scheduled to hear S.B. 113 on its consent calendar July 1.

Wyoming Legislature Passes Law Requiring Online Financial Information Disclosure

-Submitted by Kathy Carlson, Wyoming State Law Library, AALL Electronic Legal Information Access and Citation Committee (ELIACC)

In its 2009 session, the Wyoming Legislature passed the Transparency in Government Act making information as to how state funds are spent readily accessible to the public. The Act requires the creation of a public finance website by January 1, 2010. The website will provide free access to financial reports, financial audits, budgets or other financial documents that are used to allocate, appropriate, spend and account for government funds. The Act also directs that an archive of all information posted will be maintained.

SANDALL Adopts New Government Relations Policy

The San Diego Area Law Libraries (SANDALL) Government Relations Committee has crafted a [government relations policy](#) to formalize their work within SANDALL. The SANDALL Executive Board approved the new policy on May 28, 2009.

SANDALL's new policy describes how the GRC works with AALL and other local library associations, what kinds of tasks the committee performs (including monitoring federal and California legislative, regulatory and judicial developments), and how the GRC can make recommendations or propose any actions to be taken on behalf of SANDALL.

Following a [recommendation](#) in the AALL Advocacy Toolkit, SANDALL adopted the "Principles & Core Values Concerning Public Information on Government Websites," developed by the AALL Access to Electronic Legal Information Committee. The Principles recommend policies on accessibility, reliability, official status, comprehensiveness, and preservation. In 2007, the [AALL Executive Board](#) adopted the Principles and they were subsequently incorporated into the [AALL Government Relations Policy](#).

Congratulations to GRC Chair Tina Jagerson of the San Diego County Public Law Library and her committee for this exciting new accomplishment for the committee!

FREE TIME WELL SPENT: Further Reading for the Information Policy Junkie

Problems Persist with Foreign Relations of the United States

As we reported in the [February edition](#) of the *E-Bulletin*, The Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) series is in jeopardy due to a management crisis at the State Department Office of the Historian. A new [Inspector General \(IG\) review](#) of the Office of the Historian last month confirmed that there were serious management problems in the Office and recommended reassignment of its Director, Dr. Marc Susser. On May 27, the State Department appointed Ambassador John Campbell to serve as the new Acting Director of the Office of the Historian.

Indicating problems with the timely and accurate production of the FRUS series, the IG report notes that the Office of the Historian covered the Eisenhower administration in 66 volumes. The Historical Advisory Committee reported in 2007 that the 57 Nixon-Ford volumes derived from 2.5 million classified pages, but that the Office was planning only 38 volumes for the Reagan period, for which there are 8.5 million classified pages.



June News on the AALL Washington Blawg

- [Declassification Board Invites Public Comments on Classification Policies](#)

- [AALL's Fourth Annual Bloggers Get Together in D.C.](#)
- [New Collections Available on FDsys](#)
- [White House Refuses to Release Visitor Logs](#)
- [Offer Your Thoughts on Regulations.gov](#)
- [Senate Hearing on Whistleblower Protections](#)
- [New Congressional Research Service Report on State Secrets Privilege](#)
- [New State Bill Tracking Resource](#)

To follow the latest posts from the [Washington Blawg](#), you can sign up for the [RSS feed](#) or to receive the Blawg entries via [email](#).

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