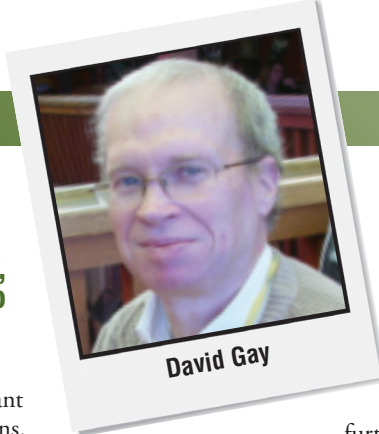


What election issue—whether it's national, local, related to information policy, or not—is most important to you and why?



David Gay

“Climate change is the most important issue to me for the upcoming elections. The world’s scientists agree—if we don’t address the serious threats of climate change by significantly reducing greenhouse gases in the coming decades, the world will reach a tipping point where our security, economies, food, and water will be at risk. In addition, left unchecked, 30 percent of all plant and animal species will become extinct during this century. Scientists stress that the world needs to reduce greenhouse cases by at least 80 percent by 2050 in order to prevent catastrophic climate change. Look it up! I hope we can respond to this challenge.”

— **David Selden**, law librarian at the National Indian Law Library/Native American Rights Fund in Boulder, Colorado

“The issue that I view as most important is not an election issue, per se, but it will surely come up: the phrase, ‘flip-flop.’ This phrase is applied to every change of a politico’s mind, regardless of the reason for change. As an information professional—heck, as a thinking adult—I want to proclaim, ‘Responsible people can change their minds. When people get new information, or when a situation alters, responsible people rethink the issue and may (gasp) change their minds and their actions.’

“Allowing the ‘flip-flop’ phrase to stand as a damning charge dooms us to leaders who are either unable or afraid to analyze information because such analysis may lead to changed opinions. And such leaders cannot lead us on any issues.”

— **Carol Ottolenghi**, reference librarian at the Ohio Attorney General’s Office in Columbus

“In my opinion, whoever the new president and our other national leaders are, the greatest need is for them to return the country to operating with a balanced budget. The United States needs to identify and state our national priorities, stick to them, determine what they are really going to cost us, and then develop the political will to figure out how we can pay for them without

further running up our national debt. Yes, as does everyone, I have my own ideas as to what these priorities and funding sources should be, but that is not important here. Neither is attempting to blame ‘the other guy’s political party’ for the current situation, since both parties are quite responsible for the fiscal mess the

country is in. This is the prime issue before all Americans in the coming election. We can’t continue to pass on some of the cost of maintaining our way of life to future generations, and, more importantly, the United States of America cannot continue to be so dependent on foreign lenders that we effectively forfeit our national sovereignty.”

— **Patrick E. Kehoe**, retired director and professor emeritus of law living in Olympia, Washington

“I believe the issue that overshadows all others is how we will continue to protect our people and property from forces in the world that would do us and our economy harm. All other problems we face—whether concerning business, social justice, education, health, or energy—will be neglected if the government fails in its most basic reason for existence, which is to keep its citizens safe.”

— **Frederick A. Riemann**, law librarian at Chevron Law Library in Houston

“Respect for the rule of law!”

— **W. David Gay**, international and comparative/government information law librarian at the University of Tulsa College of Law Mabee Legal Information Center

“In my view one of the least discussed, but vitally important, issues for this election is which candidate understands the importance of access and connectivity for all citizens in order to fully participate in electronic communication and commerce, and which candidate will provide the leadership necessary for us to move forward on this issue.

“My perception is that allowing the market forces to rule in developing Internet access and cell phone accessibility has placed us at a disadvantage in the international market. Other countries are far ahead of us in these areas, and few people in this country seem to realize or care about this.”

— **Beverly J. Burmeister**, cataloging services librarian at Valparaiso University School of Law Library



disappear — continued from page 35

I would recommend this program, as its speakers were knowledgeable and the information presented was up to the minute. As an FOIA novice interested in access to government information, I left the program excited and committed to making my first FOIA request. ■

Margaret (Meg) Butler (mbutler@nyls.edu) is the reference librarian with a concentration in international and comparative law at New York Law School.