



February 27, 2012

The Honorable Michael F. Doyle
U.S. House of Representatives
401 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Doyle:

We are writing on behalf of the Medical Library Association (MLA) and Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL) to thank you for introducing H.R. 4004, “The Federal Research Public Access Act of 2012,” and to express our strong support for this legislation. MLA and AAHSL work to promote access to quality health information for the health care community and the public. We maintain that public access to health information is vital to a healthy nation, improved research, and its translation into practice. This expansion of public access will also preserve health information for researchers, students, educators, innovators, and the public for generations to come.

MLA and AAHSL believe that H.R. 4004 will enhance the dissemination of scientific and scholarly research. It will enable researchers to realize new discoveries more quickly and encourage a more open exchange of information among the research community, accelerating the translation of research results into innovative new treatments and improvements in patient care. Because discovery is an ongoing process, it is critical that the latest information and research be made freely and openly available as rapidly as possible to scientists, healthcare providers, and the public—a goal that can be accomplished through H.R. 4004. This legislation also will augment the effect of federal research dollars through better patient care resulting from increased access to timely clinical and research information, stimulating discovery and innovation, and improving health literacy.

Our organizations played a strong leadership role in supporting the development of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) public access policy, and we affirm our support of expansion of public access policies across the Federal government. As a result of the NIH Public Access Policy, 5,600 manuscripts are deposited into PubMed Central each month facilitating readership by hundreds of thousands of researchers and millions of Americans. The National Library of Medicine estimates that on a typical weekday, more than 500,000 unique users access PubMed Central to retrieve approximately one million articles. MLA and AAHSL have observed firsthand the significant benefit of providing public access to publications arising from NIH funded research including its positive benefit-cost ratio, return on investment, and efficacy and efficiency to fuel new research, discoveries, and therapies.

The Federal Research Public Access Act will also enhance access to important research and clinical information currently unavailable to many smaller healthcare, public health, and academic institutions and agencies that cannot afford to subscribe to all of the journals they need.

For all of these reasons, we thank you for re-introducing “The Federal Research Public Access Act.” The health sciences library community stands ready to support your efforts to secure passage of this timely and important legislation.

Please let us know if we can provide you with information or offer our support in any way as this legislation moves forward.

Sincerely,



Gerald Perry, AHIP, President
Medical Library Association



Gary Freiburger, AHIP, President
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries

Cc: Representative Kevin Yoder (R-KS)
Representative Lacy Clay (D-MO)

Organizational Biographies

The Medical Library Association (MLA) (<http://www.mlanet.org>) is a nonprofit educational organization with 4,000 health sciences information professional individual and institutional members worldwide. Founded in 1898, MLA provides lifelong educational opportunities, supports a knowledgebase of health information research, and works with a global network of partners to promote the importance of quality information for improved health to the health care community and the public.

The Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL) (<http://www.aahsl.org>) is composed of the libraries of 124 accredited U.S. and Canadian schools as well as 26 associate members. AAHSL supports academic health sciences libraries and directors in advancing the patient care, research, education and community service missions of academic health centers through visionary executive leadership and expertise in health information, scholarly communication, and knowledge management.



February 27, 2012

The Honorable John Cornyn
United States Senate
17 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cornyn:

We are writing on behalf of the Medical Library Association (MLA) and Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL) to thank you for introducing S. 2096, “The Federal Research Public Access Act of 2012,” and to express our strong support for this legislation. MLA and AAHSL work to promote access to quality health information for the health care community and the public. We maintain that public access to health information is vital to a healthy nation, improved research, and its translation into practice. This expansion of public access will also preserve health information for researchers, students, educators, innovators, and the public for generations to come.

MLA and AAHSL believe that S. 2096 will enhance the dissemination of scientific and scholarly research. It will enable researchers to realize new discoveries more quickly and encourage a more open exchange of information among the research community, accelerating the translation of research results into innovative new treatments and improvements in patient care. Because discovery is an ongoing process, it is critical that the latest information and research be made freely and openly available as rapidly as possible to scientists, healthcare providers, and the public—a goal that can be accomplished through S. 2096. This legislation also will augment the effect of federal research dollars through better patient care resulting from increased access to timely clinical and research information, stimulating discovery and innovation, and improving health literacy.

Our organizations played a strong leadership role in supporting the development of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) public access policy, and we affirm our support of expansion of public access policies across the Federal government. As a result of the NIH Public Access Policy, 5,600 manuscripts are deposited into PubMed Central each month facilitating readership by hundreds of thousands of researchers and millions of Americans. The National Library of Medicine estimates that on a typical weekday, more than 500,000 unique users access PubMed Central to retrieve approximately one million articles. MLA and AAHSL have observed firsthand the significant benefit of providing public access to publications arising from NIH funded research including its positive benefit-cost ratio, return on investment, and efficacy and efficiency to fuel new research, discoveries, and therapies.

The Federal Research Public Access Act will also enhance access to important research and clinical information currently unavailable to many smaller healthcare, public health, and academic institutions and agencies that cannot afford to subscribe to all of the journals they need.

For all of these reasons, we thank you for re-introducing “The Federal Research Public Access Act.” The health sciences library community stands ready to support your efforts to secure passage of this timely and important legislation.

Please let us know if we can provide you with information or offer our support in any way as this legislation moves forward.

Sincerely,



Gerald Perry, AHIP, President
Medical Library Association



Gary Freiburger, AHIP, President
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries

Cc: Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR)
Senator Kay Hutchison (R-TX)

Organizational Biographies

The Medical Library Association (MLA) (<http://www.mlanet.org>) is a nonprofit educational organization with 4,000 health sciences information professional individual and institutional members worldwide. Founded in 1898, MLA provides lifelong educational opportunities, supports a knowledgebase of health information research, and works with a global network of partners to promote the importance of quality information for improved health to the health care community and the public.

The Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL) (<http://www.aahsl.org>) is composed of the libraries of 124 accredited U.S. and Canadian schools as well as 26 associate members. AAHSL supports academic health sciences libraries and directors in advancing the patient care, research, education and community service missions of academic health centers through visionary executive leadership and expertise in health information, scholarly communication, and knowledge management.