



For Immediate Release
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UNIVERSITY SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC ACCESS ACT EXPANDS
Library groups commend twenty-three provosts for joining recent surge of support

Washington, DC – August 3, 2006 – Just one week after more than two dozen leading universities declared their strong support for the Federal Research Public Access Act of 2006 (S.2695), provosts from an additional 23 universities added their backing in a letter issued by the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA) and in individual correspondence. This brings the total to at least 48 universities that have gone on record as favoring the measure.

The Federal Research Public Access Act was introduced on May 2, 2006 by Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Joseph Lieberman (D-CT). It requires federal agencies that fund over \$100 million in annual external research to make electronic manuscripts of peer-reviewed journal articles that stem from their research publicly available on the Internet. The U.S. government funds an estimated 50% of university research, making this a particularly important cause for the higher education community.

The GWLA letter reads, in part: “Access to publicly funded research facilitates the open discussion needed to accelerate research, share knowledge, improve treatment of diseases, and increase human understanding. [The Public Access Act] is a crucial step in realizing this goal...”

“With the passage of this bill, researchers across the United States will have access to the results of work supported by federal government funding, which will help advance scientific understanding at a faster rate,” said David Pershing, Senior Vice-President, Academic Affairs, University of Utah. “No longer will knowledge created using public funds be limited to the wealthiest institutions and corporations. With everyone having access to up-to-date information, I am confident we will see a higher level of scientific research and innovation. This is a remarkable opportunity for educators and students across the nation.”

Signatories of the GWLA letter include provosts and vice presidents for state and non land-grant institutions, such as the University of Washington and Rice University. Their names are added to those of another twenty-five institutions, including Harvard University and Arkansas State University, who on Friday jointly issued “An Open Letter to the Higher Education Community.”

“The time is ripe for this legislation,” added Rodney Erickson, Executive Vice President and Provost of The Pennsylvania State University, who signed the Open Letter. “Many of us in the academic community believe the process of making the findings of publicly supported research more widely available will stimulate further research and education, and that is our primary mission as universities.”

“GWLA member libraries and administrators support the Public Access Act in principle and in practice,” said Adrian Alexander, Executive Director of the Greater Western Library Alliance. “The implications for research stemming from this bill are widespread, profound, and utterly positive. We are pleased to add our voices in support.”

Heather Joseph, Executive Director of SPARC (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resource Coalition), added, "This groundswell of commitment from the provost community is a significant indication that the Federal Research Public Access Act has strong support in the higher education community in the United States."

The GWLA letter, available online today, is at <http://www.gwla.org/provostletter.html>.

The Open Letter to the Higher Education Community signed by twenty-five provosts and issued on July 28, 2006 is online at http://www.taxpayeraccess.org/frpaa/Provosts_openletter_06-JUL.pdf.

The American Association of Law Libraries, American Library Association, Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries, Association of College & Research Libraries, Association of Research Libraries, Greater Western Library Alliance, Medical Library Association, SPARC, and The Special Libraries Association encourage taxpayers and other stakeholders in the scientific process to add their support for this important legislation. Details are online at <http://www.taxpayeraccess.org/frpaa/>.

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American Association of Law Libraries

www.aallnet.org

With over 5,000 members, the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) represents law librarians and related professionals who are affiliated with and serve the nearly one million men and women working in the range of U.S. legal institutions: law firms; law schools; corporate legal departments; courts; and local, state and federal government agencies. The association was founded in 1906 to promote and enhance the value of law libraries to the legal and public communities, to foster the profession of law librarianship, and to provide leadership in the field of legal information. Contact: Robert Oakley (202-662-9161)

American Library Association

www.ala.org

The American Library Association (ALA) is the oldest and largest library association in the world, with more than 65,000 members. Its mission is to provide leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all. Contact: Miriam Nisbet (202-628-8410)

Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries

www.aahsl.org

The Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL) is composed of the directors of libraries of 142 accredited U. S. and Canadian medical schools belonging to or affiliated with the Association of American Medical Colleges. AAHSL's goals are to promote excellence in academic health science libraries and to ensure that the next generation of health practitioners is trained in information seeking skills that enhance the quality of health care delivery, education, and research. The Association influences legislation and policies beneficial to the common good of academic health sciences centers and their libraries, including opportunities related to open access and new models of scholarly communication. Contact: Mary Ryan (501-686-6730)

Association of College & Research Libraries

www.ala.org/acrl

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), a division of the American Library Association, represents more than 13,000 academic and research librarians and interested individuals. ACRL is the only individual membership organization in North America that develops programs, products and services to meet the unique needs of academic and research librarians. Its initiatives enable the higher education community to understand the role that academic and research libraries play in the teaching, learning and research environments.

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Association of Research Libraries

www.arl.org

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) is an association of over 120 of the largest research libraries in North America. The member institutions serve over 160,000 faculty researchers and scholars and more than 4 million students in the U.S. and Canada. ARL's mission is to influence the changing environment of scholarly communication and the public policies that affect research libraries and the communities they serve. ARL pursues this mission by advancing the goals of its member research libraries, providing leadership in public and information policy to the scholarly and higher education communities, fostering the exchange of ideas and expertise, and shaping a future environment that leverages its interests with those of allied organizations.

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Greater Western Library Alliance

www.gwla.org

The Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA) is a consortium of 31 research libraries in 16 states in the greater Midwest and Western U.S. GWLA members share common interests in scholarly communication, resource sharing and staff development projects. GWLA was a founding member of BioOne, an electronic scholarly publishing initiative launched in 2001.

Contact: Adrian Alexander (816-926-8765)

Medical Library Association

www.mlanet.org

MLA is a nonprofit, educational organization with more than 4,500 health sciences information professional members worldwide. Founded in 1898, MLA provides lifelong educational opportunities, supports a knowledge base 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.

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SPARC (Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition)

www.arl.org/sparc

SPARC, the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resource Coalition, is an international alliance of academic and research libraries and organizations working to correct imbalances in the scholarly publishing system. Developed by ARL, SPARC has over 200 member institutions and affiliates in North America and closely collaborates with SPARC Europe, which represents more than 70 additional institutions in Europe. SPARC's strategies and activities support open access and capitalize on the networked environment to disseminate research more broadly.

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The Special Libraries Association

www.sla.org

SLA is a nonprofit global organization for innovative information professionals and their strategic partners. SLA serves more than 12,000 members in 83 countries in the information profession, including corporate, academic and government information specialists. SLA promotes and strengthens its members through learning, advocacy and networking initiatives.

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