



February 14, 2011

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Chairman of the Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
433 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy:

We are writing to express support for the USA PATRIOT Act Sunset Extension Act of 2011 (S. 193) that reauthorizes expiring provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act. Your legislation is carefully constructed to recognize the importance of balancing the government's interest in protecting national security with defending the constitutional rights of the American people.

The American Association of Law Libraries, Medical Library Association and Special Libraries Association represent 20,000 librarians and information professionals. Since the enactment of the USA PATRIOT Act in 2001, our organizations have addressed the need to protect the civil liberties and privacy of library users.

We are very pleased that your legislation codifies several oversight and civil liberties provisions addressed by Attorney General Eric Holder's December 9, 2010 letter in response to your request. We are particularly pleased that S. 193 raises the standard for Section 215 orders, the so-called "library provision" of the USA PATRIOT Act, by requiring the government to show that the tangible things sought are relevant to an authorized investigation and connected to a suspected agent of a foreign power. We also commend you for ensuring that the recipient of a Section 215 order can challenge the order and any nondisclosure statement accompanying it in court.


In addition, we are pleased that your legislation includes a higher standard for National Security Letters (NSLs), along with the right to judicial review, enhanced public reporting requirements and audits of the use of NSLs. It is important that the NSL provision sunsets on December 13, 2013 so that there will be an opportunity for additional congressional review.

Our organizations applaud you for introducing the USA PATRIOT Act Sunset Extension Act of 2011 and we look forward to working with you and your staff to ensure its enactment.

Sincerely,



Kate Hagan
Executive Director
American Association of Law Libraries



Carla Funk
Executive Director
Medical Library Association



Douglas W. Newcomb
Chief Operating Officer
Special Libraries Association



American Association of Law Libraries

MAXIMIZING THE POWER OF THE LAW LIBRARY COMMUNITY SINCE 1906

The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) is a nonprofit educational organization with over 5,000 members nationwide. AALL's mission is 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 and information policy. <http://www.aall.org/>
Contact: Kate Hagan, (312) 205-8016



The Medical Library Association (MLA) is a nonprofit, educational organization with more than 4,000 health sciences information professional 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.

<http://www.mlanet.org/>

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The Special Libraries Association (SLA) is a nonprofit global organization for innovative information professionals and their strategic partners. SLA serves about 10,000 members in 75 countries in the information profession, including corporate, academic, and government information specialists. SLA promotes and strengthens its members through learning, advocacy, and networking initiatives. www.sla.org

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