



April 4, 2011

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chair
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Boxer:

We are writing to thank you for your continued commitment to conducting oversight of the reorganization of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) library network. We appreciate your request to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) for further review of the reorganization of EPA's library system. Based on GAO's troubling findings in its September 2010 report (GAO-10-947), we urge you to consider holding hearings to further explore the issues raised.

The American Association of Law Libraries, the Medical Library Association, and the Special Libraries Association together represent more than 20,000 librarians and information professionals. Our members are frequent users of EPA's libraries and rely on these libraries for access to current and historic scientific, environmental, legal, and other government information.

As you know, representatives from our associations first met with EPA officials in spring 2006 when we learned about the closures. We expressed our concerns about the library closures and the lack of information about how it would go about ensuring continued access to its valuable resources. We are thankful for your commitment to reopen the closed EPA libraries which led to Congress providing a \$1 million order included in the FY 2008 appropriations omnibus bill (P.L.110-161) to reopen the libraries.

We are very concerned with GAO's recent findings that indicate that EPA has not yet finalized its strategic plan, which has been available in draft form since July 2007. The plan does not address GAO's previous recommendations to include goals or timeliness. In response to the report, EPA stated that it planned to resume work on the plan in late 2010 and complete its strategic plan in Fiscal Year 2011. We urge you to investigate the status of the strategic plan.


We are also troubled that EPA has not determined what documents will be digitized or identified target dates for completing the digitization project. While EPA has begun digitizing some of the libraries' holdings, it has not completed an inventory of its holdings and thus cannot determine the number of documents that will be digitized or the associated costs.

We thank you again for your oversight of the EPA library closures and hope that you will consider holding a hearing on the issues we have raised.

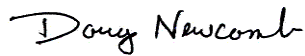
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kate Hagan".

Kate Hagan
Executive Director
American Association of Law Libraries

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carla Funk".

Carla Funk
Executive Director
Medical Library Association

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doug Newcomb".

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/>
Contact: Carla Funk, (312) 419-9094, ext. 14



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
Contact: Doug Newcomb, (703) 647-4923