



July 16, 2007

To: The U.S. Senate

Dear Senators;

On behalf of seven national organizations, collectively representing over 140,000 libraries in the United States and employing over 350,000 librarians and other personnel, we are writing to express our support for timely online access to articles reporting the results of government-funded research.

As the FY08 Labor/HHS/Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill comes to a vote, please support language in the measure directing the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to change its Public Access Policy so that NIH-funded researchers are *required* to deposit copies of NIH-funded research into the online archive of the National Library of Medicine.

The NIH Public Access Policy is designed to dramatically expand use of NIH research findings, enhance management of NIH's research portfolio, and provide for a sustainable archive of research results funded with U.S. taxpayer dollars. However, as a voluntary policy in place for two full years, it has not come close to achieving its intended vital results. In fact, it has attained a deposit rate by individual researchers of less than five percent. Top officials at NIH, including Director Zerhouni, have publicly recognized the shortcomings of the existing policy and have indicated that, for it to achieve its potential, it needs to be made mandatory. Two influential advisory bodies – the NIH Public Access Working Group and the National Library of Medicine's Board of Regents – have reached the same conclusion and recommended that the NIH policy be mandatory.

We urge you to:

- Support the Appropriations Committee's language directing NIH to make its public access policy mandatory. This will ensure NIH-funded researchers are required to deposit an electronic copy of their final, peer-reviewed manuscript in NIH's PubMed Central online archive upon the article's acceptance for publication, for public accessibility as soon as possible and no later than 12 months after publication.
- Oppose any attempt to strike or change the language that emerged from the Labor/HHS Subcommittee – particularly calls to make the policy voluntary.

Without firm direction to NIH, the public access policy will not achieve its intended results – to the detriment of our nation's substantial investment in biomedical research. We respectfully ask that you support the mandatory NIH public access provision advanced by the Appropriations Committee in the FY08 appropriations bill. Thank you.

American Association of Law Libraries
www.aallnet.org
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American Library Association

www.ala.org

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Association of College & Research Libraries

www.ala.org/acrl

Contact: Kara Malenfant (312-280-2510)

Association of Research Libraries

www.arl.org

Contact: Prudence Adler (202-296-2296)

Greater Western Library Alliance

www.gwla.org

Contact: Joni Blake (816-926-8765)

SPARC (Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition)

www.arl.org/sparc

Contact: Heather Joseph (202-296-2296)

Special Libraries Association

www.sla.org

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