

## ALA members host #eBooksForAll discussions with House leadership

Negotiations between library community and Macmillan have reached an impasse. Since Macmillan Publishers' eight-week embargo on sales of new e-book titles to libraries went into effect November 1, state library associations at every level have responded with ire and have taken a variety of actions to express their opposition.

At the ALA Midwinter Meeting in late January, Macmillan CEO John Sargent appeared before a room of librarians to explain the rationale behind the company's new policy. The rationale was not received well. In a statement issued immediately following Sargent's "Ask Me Anything" session, ALA President Wanda Brown said, "[H]e has not been listening to us. . . . We see only one acceptable outcome for this situation. Macmillan must lift the embargo."

As reported previously, in October 2019, ALA submitted comments in response to a request from the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial and Administrative Law, to contribute to the Committee's investigation into competition in digital markets. (Much of the report is dedicated to the challenges for libraries that purchase academic and research content.) In early February, the Rhode Island Library Association hosted Subcommittee Chair David Cicilline (RI-1) to discuss the impact of Macmillan's embargo and how other players in digital markets are hurting

his constituents and library users across the country.

Cicilline said he was "grateful that the Rhode Island Library Association put together today's roundtable so we could discuss these issues in detail. I look forward to continuing our work together as the investigation wraps up and legislative fixes are introduced later this year." He added that access to e-books was a concrete example of how the abusive behavior is impacting people, and he plans to include it in the investigation report, scheduled for release within the next two months. Cicilline also encouraged other advocates around the country to hold similar discussions with their representatives, especially those who serve with him on the House Antitrust Subcommittee. ALA is facilitating similar engagements for ALA members in select congressional districts.

## ALA ready for fiscal year (FY) 2021 #FundLibraries campaign

The congressional appropriations cycle for FY 2021 officially begins with the release of the White House budget proposal, set for February 10. ALA expects the Institute of Museum and Library Services and other library-eligible funding programs to be eliminated for a fourth consecutive year. ALA takes this threat seriously, and urges advocates to contact their elected leaders to sign on ALA's "Dear Appropriator" letters in the House and Senate, in support of both the Library Services and Technology Act and Innovative Approaches to Literacy program. Find your senators' and representative's signing history for these letters, and sign up to be an advocate at [ala.org/fundlibraries](http://ala.org/fundlibraries). 

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