

Library Advocacy and the Strategy (or Art?) of Modern Storytelling





Emily Wagner

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American Library Association**



Questions

- 1. How is communicating with elected officials changing?**
- 2. What is modern storytelling?**
- 3. What are the available methods for creating an asset map?**
- 4. What methods are available to tell library stories in new and compelling ways?**
- 5. How can library supporters leverage social media to participate in the art of modern storytelling?**



Goals

- **Define grassroots vs. grasstops**
- **Examine how communication with elected officials has changed**
- **Discuss modern storytelling**
- **Learn about power mapping**
- **Make some advocacy goals**

Grassroots

Grassroots advocates care so much about their issues that they 'plant seeds' of concern and try to grow awareness and engage citizens.

Quick Poll: How many comments on social media are enough for a Congressional office to pay attention?

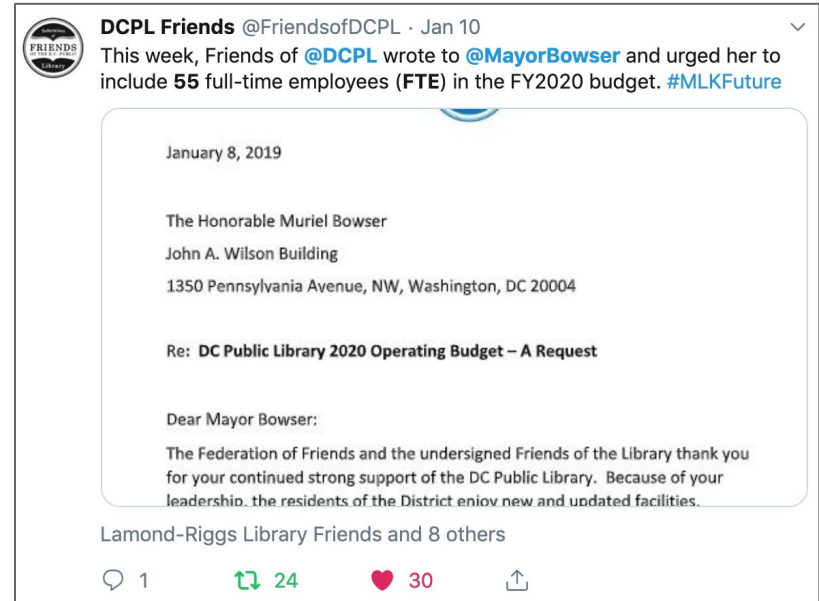


Grassroots

32 comments

Grassroots campaign in D.C.

- **D.C. Public Library wanted a \$5 million dollar increase**
 - 1st letter shared 30 times
 - Reached 3,000 people
 - Reached 20,000 people digitally by day 5
 - 20 letters from community members and friends
- **Mayor's budget increased library budget by \$3.9 million**



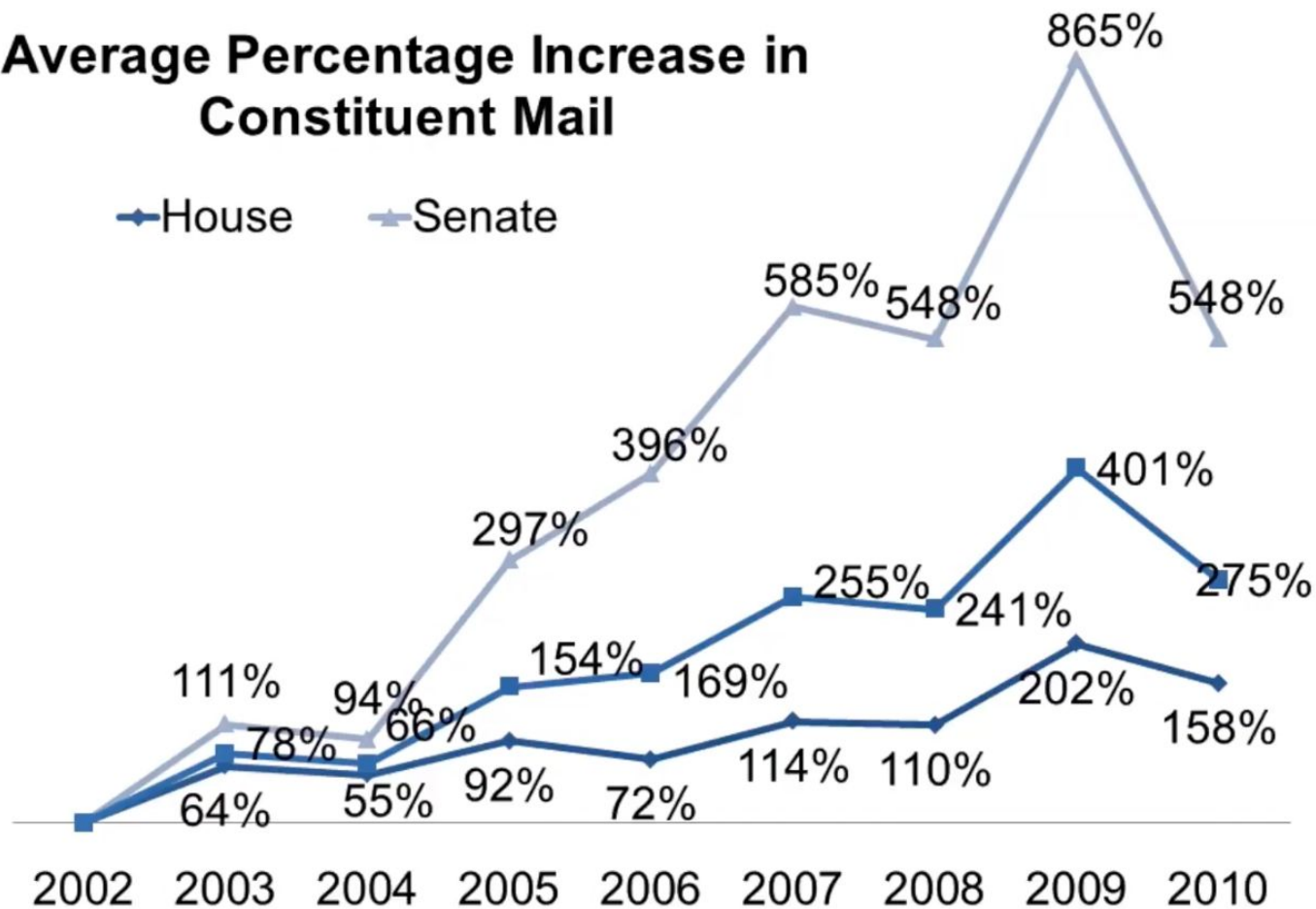
Grasstops

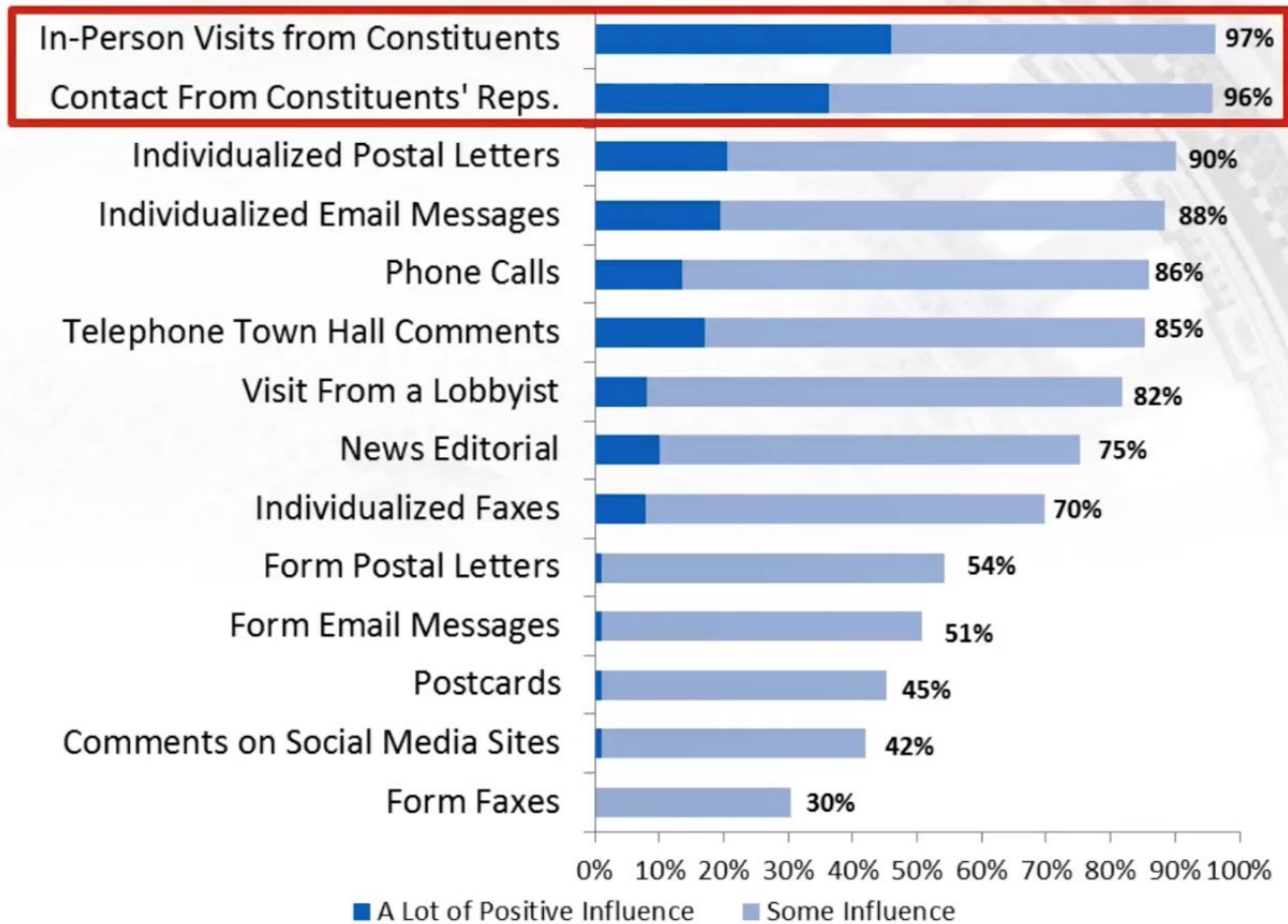
Grasstops advocates are opinion leaders and folks who have connections to elected officials or the people who can influence them.

YOU!

Average Percentage Increase in Constituent Mail

House Senate





Find Your Elected Officials

THE 191ST GENERAL COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Bills & Laws

Budget

Legislators

Hearings & Events

Committees & Commissions

State House

MYLEGISLATURE

Emily Wagner

Search the Legislature...

PROGRESS

33%

★★★★★

MyLegislature

★★★★★

Bills & Laws

★★★★★

Legislators

★★★★★

Committees

Bill No.

Title

★

S.746

An Act to establish a Master of Library Science assistance program

★

H.1837

An Act authorizing the town of Athol to establish a special fund for the town of Athol Public Library

★

H.2495

An Act in aid of libraries

malegislature.gov

Massachusetts Libraries

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

FY2020

Legislative Agenda

7000-9401

State Aid to Regional Libraries (MLS & LFC)

Massachusetts Library System (MLS)

MLS provides statewide delivery of Interlibrary Loan items that patrons request through library networks. This gives residents access to more than 53.5 million items statewide, saves libraries a total of \$55 million each year, and ensures that no matter where a person lives he/she has equal access to library resources.

Delivery is in jeopardy

The cost of delivery has increased 45% since 2011. State funding to support delivery has not kept pace with rising costs. Some libraries no longer receive delivery, there are delays in delivery, and last year some libraries paid a fee for the delivery sorting process.

Increased funding will stabilize delivery and support statewide resource sharing.

Library for the Commonwealth (LFC)

The Library for the Commonwealth at the Boston Public Library expands access for all Massachusetts residents to collections, reference and research assistance, education, skill-building tools, and our shared cultural heritage. It also provides instant access to online services including eBooks, downloadable audiobooks and music, and streaming media.

Collections have been reduced

Some database services, audiobook access, and eBook collections have been eliminated and budgets for collections have been reduced, especially for electronic resources and eBooks. In addition, outreach to underserved populations has been cut back.

Increased funding will restore some electronic resources and allow for broadened digitization efforts across the Commonwealth.

7000-9506

Library Technology & Resource Sharing (Library Networks)

When it comes to technology, a lot has changed since 2001. Yet funding to support library technology is 36% lower than it was in 2001. While this budget line received a significant increase in FY2019, nearly two decades of underfunding means much work remains in order to bring library technology fully into the 21st century.

Increased funding will be used to invest in technology that provides patrons better access to materials and to increase digital collections offered to patrons including eBooks, audio books, and streaming audio and music.

Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP)

A New Capital Construction Bond is Needed

The MBLC is requesting \$250 million in new bond funding for this successful program. Without it 18 projects that are currently on the MPLCP waitlist will not be funded. The funding will also be used for a future Planning and Design grant round and a new Construction grant round.

Raise the Annual Cap

If the annual capital budget for the MPLCP stays at \$20 million the last project on the waiting list will be funded in 2028, completed in 2033. The longer a community goes without being able to start its project, the higher the construction costs will be. The MBLC is asking to raise the cap to \$25 million starting in FY 2020 to shorten the process.

Proven Success

Since 1987, MBLC library building staff have guided communities through 250 projects. The program is nationally recognized and serves as a model for other states.

See reverse for more information

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

98 North Washington Street, Boston, MA 02114

617-725-1860

mass.gov/mbic (agency site)

mass.gov/libraries (consumer portal)

Modern Storytelling





Modern Storytelling

It's not about doing
social media. **It's about
being social.**



Modern Storytelling

Who has the time?

You are already doing it!



Deb L @DebLaBombard · Aug 23

The new **Leicester Public Library** is AWESOME! Anyone interested in local history must check out the new museum there.



3



Nicole Apostola @niccommawoo · Aug 29

If you're a fan of musical theater, the **Leicester Public Library** is selling HUNDREDS of CDs of what appear to be the original cast recording from every Broadway musical from the 1960s-1990s. A buck a piece. They may only be around for another week or so.



Town of Leicester MA @TownofLeicester · Aug 28

State Representative David LeBoeuf will be holding office hours every 4th Tuesday from 6-8pm at the **Leicester Public Library**. All constituents are welcome to attend to ask questions or address concerns. For more information please contact his office at 617-722-2575.



**You are already
doing it!**



Visit Sturbridge @visitsturbridge · Jul 23

Here's some exciting news, [#Santa](#) is coming to the [#JoshuaHydeLibrary](#) on Thursday at 11 for [#ChristmasinJuly](#)! A great chance for you and your kids to meet [#Santa](#) and start thinking about those [#Christmas](#) wishes! Go to sturbridgelibrary.org for more info! [#visitsturbridge](#)



**You are already
doing it!**



You are already doing it!



Central Mass RPC @CentralMassRPC · May 29

Great discussion on Municipal Finances, Board/Staffing Constraints, and Opportunities for Shared Services this morning at the **Athol Public Library**. Thanks @ShaunSuhoski for hosting!! This statewide Rural Policy Plan is really coming along 🙌



Shaun Suhoski and 2 others



The United Arc @TheUnitedArc · Sep 4

The United Arc, Inc./GAAAFSN & The **Athol Public Library** will be hosting local Author Karen Zilberstein, the author of *Parents Under Pressure* 📖.

Please RSVP to Allie Young at aliceyoung@unitedarc.org.

[#karenzilberstein](#) [#parentsunderpressure](#) [#theunitedarc](#) [#atholpubliclibrary](#)

The United Arc, Inc./GAAAFSN

& The Athol Public Library

will be hosting local Author:

Karen Zilberstein



PARENTS UNDER



The United Arc
For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities

**You are already
doing it!**



Only In Boston @OnlyInBOS · Jul 2

Live in Fitchburg?

The **Fitchburg Public Library** has bicycles that Fitchburg residents over 18 can borrow for one week.



Wil Darcangelo @wildarcangelo · May 28

Looking forward to installing my glass tomorrow morning at the **Fitchburg Public Library** in time for the opening reception tomorrow at 6pm!

facebook.com/story.php?stor...



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doing it!



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wilbrahamlibrary • Follow



wilbrahamlibrary No-sew fleece blankets made with love 💕 and ready to donate to Shriners Hospital for Children in Springfield. #shriners #shrinershospital #donate #teen #communityservice #handmade #nosew #fleece #wilbraham #diy #diycrafts #wilbrahamlibrary #kindness #librariesofinstagram #fleeceblankets #library #giveback #teenadvisoryboard #teenlibrarian

34w



shrinersspringfield Thank you all so much for this generous donation! Fleece tie blankets are very popular with our patients, especially this time of year. You picked out awesome patterns!



👍 Liked by newenglandlib and 68 others

JANUARY 22

Add a comment...

Post

**You are already
doing it!**



You are already doing it!



Make Yourself Discoverable



f @AmericanLibraryAssociation
@ @AmericanLibraryAssociation
t @ALALibrary

**TAG
YOUR
PHOTOS**



Take Photos in *Your* Museum!
We love your views!
Share them with us & we'll share them with others!



@capecodmuseumofart
Facebook 

#capecodmuseumofart
Instagram 

@capemuseumofart
Twitter 

Then what?

1. Reshare
2. Say thanks
3. Add context
4. Tag your elected officials (if it makes sense)

Tweet Deck

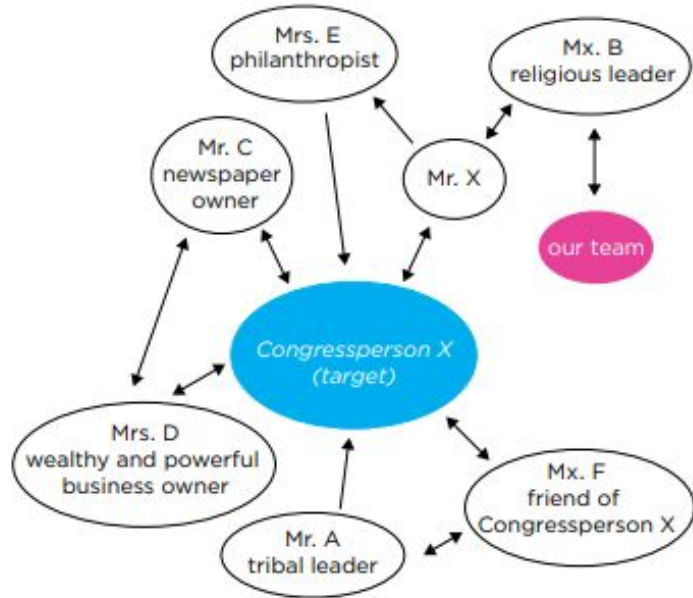


Power Mapping

1. **Primary** – Your Decision-Maker
2. **Secondary** – Your Influencers

Power Mapping

a. Relationship Circles

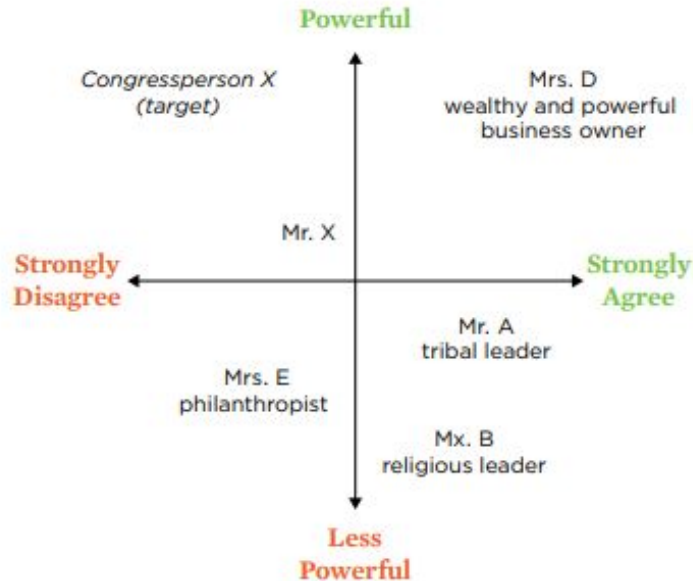


Benefits

1. Focuses your outreach
2. Helps you see where your expertise best fits into your existing network
3. Builds your momentum in one direction

Power Mapping

b. Quadrant Analysis



Benefits

1. Fun brainstorming!
2. Guides strategic decision making for how to prioritize outreach
3. Helps to reveal high effort vs. high impact

Power Mapping

(In other words, doing your homework!)

1. What are their interests + track record on libraries?
2. Who can directly influence them?
3. Whose support is important to them and why?
4. What do they stand to win by saying “yes” or stand to lose by saying “no” ?
5. What’s prevented them from saying “yes” so far?

Goal: Build Relationships

- **Primary: Elected officials need to hear from their constituents.**
 - Set up a meeting and introduce yourself.
 - Arrange a tour.
 - Host their town hall or community meeting.
 - Join their community interest groups
- **Secondary: Influencers want to help!**
 - Ask them ahead of time to share and tag you
 - Thank and praise them publically!

Goal: Make An Annual Plan

The thing about advocacy is:
it's year-round.

It's about cultivating a relationship that earns the trust of decision makers and wins victories, **step by step over time.**

ala.org/advocacy/year-round

2019 ALA YEAR-ROUND ADVOCACY CHECKLIST



JANUARY

Welcome new and returning members of Congress. Offer your branch location as a place they can hold meetings and town halls. Also, make sure you are registered as an ALA advocate on ala.org/takeaction.



FEBRUARY

Work with your local newspaper or neighborhood blog to run a story about how your library is funded and how federal dollars support your branch, directly or indirectly.



MARCH

Call your senators and reps to remind them of the libraries in their district and to ask them to sign on to the "Dear Appropriator" letters to support federal funding for libraries.



APRIL

Celebrate National Library Week all month long! Tweet at your members of Congress with pictures highlighting the unique services your library provides to your community.



MAY

Follow up on your advocacy work by inviting local congressional staff to tour your library or join an upcoming event. Share a picture of the visit on social with the hashtag #FundLibraries.



JUNE

Not only will Annual be in Washington, ALA will be celebrating the National Week of Making in DC, too! Tweet a picture of your makerspace with the tag #NationofMakers to @ALALibrary.



JULY

Request in-district meetings with your senators and representative as well as their staff when they are home in August. Better yet, invite them to your library for a tour!



AUGUST

Congress is in recess! Check your senators and representatives' websites to find out when their town halls will be held. Attend and ask them about their position on funding libraries.



SEPTEMBER

Celebrate Library Card Sign-Up Month by signing patrons up to become ALA advocates on ala.org/takeaction when they get their new card.



OCTOBER

Next year is an election year! Keep an eye on likely candidates in your local area so you can start educating them about what makes the local library vital to their community.



NOVEMBER

Express your appreciation to your elected officials for their support for libraries - public acknowledgment and praise will help to keep your growing relationships strong!



DECEMBER

Watch your inbox closely and respond to the last calls-to-action of the year. Remember to share these end-of-year alerts with your professional networks.



Goal: Make An Annual Plan

2019 YEAR-ROUND	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
	Celebrate Library Card Sign-Up Month by engaging influencers in your public awareness campaign. Partner across local organizations to highlight the value and impact of libraries.	Finalize your state's legislative plan and develop a communications plan so that all members/advocates are on the same page. Join your state take action page.	Publicly express your appreciation to elected officials, community partners, and other supporters in a public forum--whether in a public meeting or letter to the editor.	As you reflect on the many conferences and professional development that you've attended during the past year, commit to one area for growth or renewed focus as a library advocate during the upcoming year.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

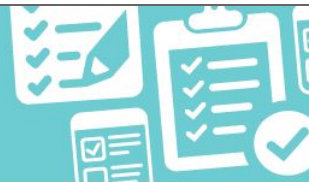
ala.org/advocacy/year-round

Goal: Make it a Team Sport

- Staff, friends, and key volunteers
- Strengths
- What's special?
- Goals
- **What network do you bring?**

ala.org/advocacy/build-relationships

American Library Association 2019 Board Member Survey



Name: _____

1. If you were sufficiently briefed on an issue or given adequate background information, would you be willing to make an occasional contact with one or more of your elected representatives or with executive officials—at the national, state or local level—to urge them to support (or oppose) a legislative proposal (or an administrative action) that affected your library system?

☐ Yes ☐ Depends on the issue ☐ No (If no, skip to Question 5.)

2. With which of the following public officials—many of whom represent part of the system service area—do you have a personal relationship, and how would you characterize that relationship?

(See attached maps for districts of elected officials.)

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVES/DISTRICT #	Close Contact	Fairly Familiar	We've Met
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
UNITED STATES SENATORS	Close Contact	Fairly Familiar	We've Met
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
STATE OFFICIALS	Close Contact	Fairly Familiar	We've Met

Goal: Use Your Network

You Retweeted



Rep. Jennifer Wexton @RepWexton · Apr 16

I love libraries, so it was great to tour the Sterling Library with @LoudounLibrary and @ALALibrary. Libraries are more than places to check out books—they're where communities come together and ideas come to life. Libraries lift up our neighborhoods. 📖🏡

#LibrariesTransform – at Sterling Library



3

18

70



You Retweeted



Julian Cyr @JulianCyr · 10h

Fabulous to join fellow Cape Codder @elwags from @ALALibrary at @MashpeeLibrary today! @CLAMSnet is the heartbeat of the Cape & Islands, delivering services—from workforce readiness to lifelong learning—designed to meet our community's current & future needs. #LibrariesTransform



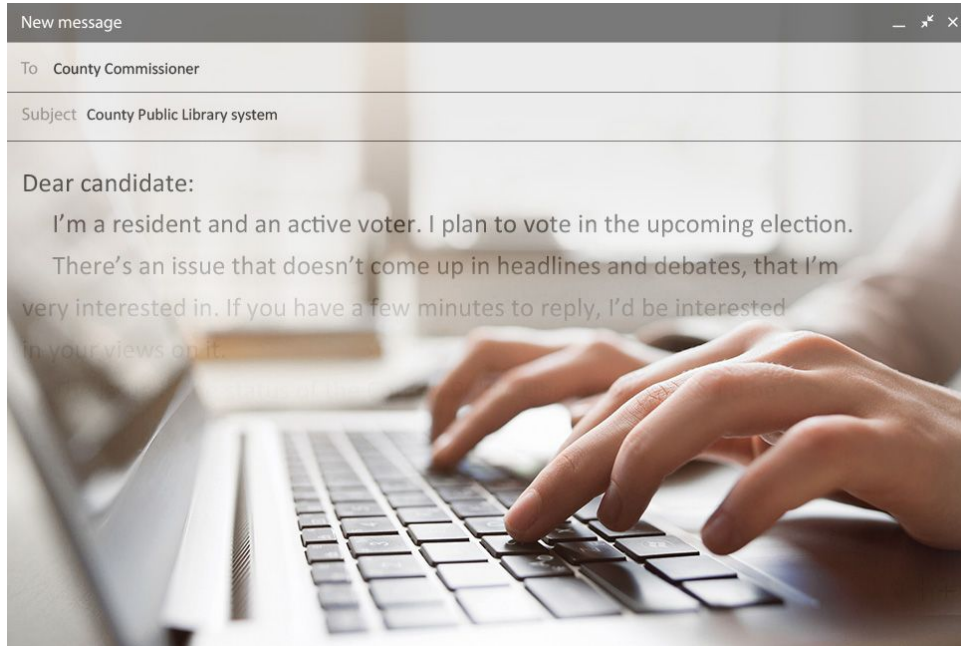
1

2

19



Goal: Build Relationships *Ahead of Time*



Dear Candidate:

I am a local resident and an active voter. I plan to vote in the upcoming primary election. There's an issue that doesn't come up in headlines and debates that I'm very interested in: the county public library system. If you have a few minutes to reply, I'd like to know your views on the status of the system. What should be done to develop it and what role is it playing and should it play in the life of our county?

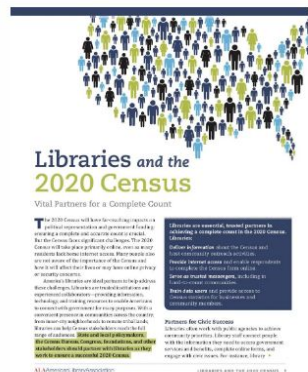
Thank you in advance for your thoughts.

Goal: Build Relationships *Ahead of Time*

- 1 email bounced
- 5 did not respond
- 9 responded, with response times ranging from under an hour to 13 days

Goal: Start the Conversation

Policy Briefs



October 2018
Libraries and the 2020 Census
Libraries are essential partners in achieving a complete count in the 2020 Census.



September 2018
Equitable Opportunity for Tribal Communities
Broadband is essential for learning, working, and daily life overall.



January 2018
Leveraging E-rate to Provide Opportunity
The work of libraries demands robust and reasonably-priced internet connectivity.



March 2017
Libraries Help and Honor Our Veterans: Employment, Education, and Connection
As service members become Veterans, America's libraries are well-positioned to address them.

ala.org/advocacy/tools

| Questions?

A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life-raft and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination."

– Caitlin Moran

ala.org/advocacy

