



STATE LIBRARY DIVISION

Mark Gordon, Governor | Patricia L. Bach, Director | Jamie Markus, State Librarian

August 14, 2023

Tracie Hall, Executive Director
American Library Association
225 N Michigan Ave, Suite 1300
Chicago, Illinois 60601

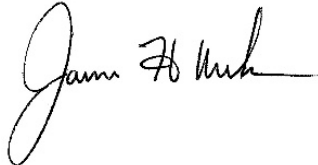
Executive Director Hall,

The Wyoming State Library has been a member of the American Library Association for 99 years and has benefited from professional development opportunities conferred by membership, as well as its advocacy for libraries and the profession on the national and global level. However, we have grown concerned that the ALA has become politicized. This change has been reflected in views expressed by its current leadership, as well as actions and guidance that appear to stray from ALA's core mission "to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all."

Wyoming is a state that values long-term relationships and understands that we may not always agree. We also understand that in order to effect change, we must sit at the table. As such, we call upon the ALA Executive Director to open a dialogue with the State of Wyoming through both the Western Council of State Libraries, of which I am President, and the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies. We hope these discussions prompt ALA to reflect on its current direction and chart a path forward that leads the organization to refocus its energy and policy discussions on those things that are directly related to supporting libraries, library staff, and library patrons.

While Wyoming may never fully agree with all ALA policies, actions, and activities, our State Library can maintain membership in a national organization that devotes itself to supporting all libraries, training library staff, and defending the First Amendment. We recognize that change is not easy or fast. Active discussions and action toward meaningful change will inform the decision to renew our membership for our 100th year. Wyoming's public, school, and academic libraries are independently governed and this decision will not impact them.

Regardless of the outcome of these discussions, the Wyoming State Library remains committed to supporting the Wyoming library community through active participation in the Wyoming Library Association. This organization provides continuing education opportunities for library staff; builds future leaders through the Wyoming Library Leadership Institute and annual LEAD mentoring program; supports summer reading and literacy activities in Wyoming libraries; and maintains a variety of interest groups and communities of practice that offer discussion, feedback, and ideas to over 400 public, school, academic, and special library outlets across the state.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie Markus". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jamie Markus
Wyoming State Librarian