



September 7, 2006

The Honorable Lamar Smith, Chairman
Subcommittee on the Courts, the Internet, and Intellectual Property
Committee on Judiciary
B-351A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-5741

Dear Chairman Smith,

On behalf of the Library Copyright Alliance, we are writing in strong support of H.R. 5439, the "Orphan Works Act of 2006." This legislation, once enacted, will greatly help to make cultural heritage more broadly available to the public. We thank you for your leadership in introducing this legislation and we very much appreciate your support of this important legislation.

The special collections in our libraries, museums, state and local historical societies, and archives are deep and rich in our Nation's cultural and scientific heritage. These collections include significant amounts of orphan works, works whose owners are difficult or impossible to locate. These repositories with orphan works are not being made publicly available for fear of copyright owners coming forward and demanding unknown amounts of compensation. Despite extensive and costly searches to locate orphan work owners, without a legislative solution, the risk remains too high for our institutions to make these works publicly available.

Resolving the orphan works problem presents significant new educational opportunities because these works will be publicly accessible and available to students, faculty and the public. Access to these resources supports and inspires new scholarship by making the works of previous generations more accessible and useful to current users.

Thank you for your continued leadership on the orphan works legislation.

Sincerely,

Prudence S. Adler
Associate Executive Director
Association of Research Libraries

On behalf of the Library Copyright Alliance: the American Association of Law Libraries, the American Library Association, the Association of Research Libraries, the Medical Library Association and the Special Libraries Association (contact information for each association is attached).



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: Mary Alice Baish (202-662-9200)



The American Library Association (ALA) is a nonprofit educational organization of over 65,000 librarians, library trustees, and other friends of libraries dedicated to improving library services and promoting the public interest in a free and open information society. <http://www.ala.org/>

Contact: Miriam Nisbet (202-628-8410)



Association
of Research
Libraries

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) is a nonprofit organization of 123 research libraries in North America. Its mission is to influence the changing environment of scholarly communication and the public policies that affect research libraries and the communities they serve. ARL pursues this mission by advancing the goals of its member research libraries, providing leadership in public and information policy to the scholarly and higher education communities, fostering the exchange of ideas and expertise, and shaping a future environment that leverages its interests with those of allied organizations.

<http://www.arl.org/>

Contact: Prue Adler (202-296-2296)



MEDICAL LIBRARY
ASSOCIATION
Quality information for improved health
www.mlanet.org

The Medical Library Association (MLA), a nonprofit, educational organization, is a leading advocate for health sciences information professionals with more than 4,700 members worldwide. Through its programs and services, 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 x.14)



The Special Libraries Association (SLA) is a nonprofit global organization for innovative information professionals and their strategic partners. SLA serves more than 12,000 members in 83 countries in the information profession, including corporate, academic and government information specialists. SLA promotes and strengthens its members through learning, advocacy and networking initiatives. <http://www.sla.org/>
Contact: Doug Newcomb (703-647-4923)