



Michigan Library Association Statement and Recommendations on the ALA Forward Together Process

The Michigan Library Association's (MLA) Board of Directors has reviewed Forward Together, the American Library Association's (ALA) recommendations for a reimagined ALA. Upon careful consideration, MLA supports ALA as it adopts changes to its governance structure by implementing much needed changes that have been vetted and clarified by the Forward Together Working Group, Forward Together Fiscal Analysis Working Group, and ALA Council.

MLA understands that the Forward Together Resolutions Working Group (FT-RWG) is currently working on a series of resolutions to help shape ALA Council debate and, ultimately, a decision on a reorganization of ALA's governance structure. To aid the FT-RWG in its work, MLA issues the following recommendations in the spirit of shared governance necessary to ensure a bright future for ALA, a future that includes the voices of all members.

MLA recommends that:

- ALA expand the number of seats on the Board of Directors from 17 to 21 to include one representative from each of the four leadership assemblies – Chapter Leadership, Round Table Leadership, Division Leadership, and Affiliates
- ALA allow each of the four Leadership Assemblies to establish their own internal voting process, and ultimately choose who will represent them on the Board of Directors
- ALA reconsider AASL and ACRL Chapter leadership as part of the Chapter Assembly
 - State/Regional Chapters have specific concerns and needs and should focus on their states and territories, not their library type
 - As Divisions, AASL and ACRL will already be included in the Division Assembly
 - As Divisions, AASL and ACRL may already be included in and appointed to Board of Directors' seats
- ALA's Board of Directors' and Council meetings be increased in number and conducted in as open and accessible a manner as possible: Transparency of the discussions/decisions made by governance bodies is a key to engagement from its members
- ALA make an effort to offer all meetings to the full membership in an online format.

We thank you for your consideration of these recommendations, and for all that ALA members, Councilors, Boards of Directors, and staff have done up to this point. We know that "getting it right" is time consuming work and by asking for and receiving input from every corner of the nation, a healthy, engaged and realigned ALA will emerge. MLA is standing by to take part in the next steps in moving forward into a reimagined future for ALA.