



April 11, 2011

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related
Agencies
United States Senate
503 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison
Ranking Member, Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
United States Senate
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski, Chairman Wolf, Ranking Member Hutchison and Ranking Member Fattah:

On behalf of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), Medical Library Association (MLA) and Special Libraries Association (SLA), we write to oppose the proposed elimination of funding for the U.S. Census Bureau's Statistical Abstract Program included in President Obama's Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Request to Congress. We ask that you continue to fund this important program, which consists of many valuable and popular products, including the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*.

AALL, MLA and SLA together represent more than 20,000 librarians and information professionals. Our members are frequent users of the Statistical Abstract Program's products, all of which will be terminated if funding for the program is eliminated. These include the *Statistical Abstract*, *USA Counties*, *State and Metropolitan Area Data Book*, *County and City Data Book*, *State and County QuickFacts* and *Map Stats*, several of which are published in print and all of which are available online for no fee.

The authoritative and comprehensive *Statistical Abstract* has been published every year since 1878. It brings together data from 300 sources, including the Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and other Federal agencies, non-profit organizations and the private sector. It is a popular research guide heavily used by businesses, researchers, students and others looking for information on the social, political, and economic organization of the United States. Last year alone, the Statistical Abstract Program's Web site received over 1.5 million unique hits.

The *Abstract* is much more than just another place to find government statistics. The *Abstract* includes introductory text to each section, source notes below each table and an appendix to help users find other statistical publications and sources they need. In addition, expert staff are available to answer questions about the data and methodology. Eliminating funding for the

Statistical Abstract Program will mean researchers will have to sort through hundreds of sources on their own to determine what is reliable and relevant for their use.

We urge you to continue funding for the Statistical Abstract Program so that librarians, researchers, and members of the public will continue to have access to the program's valuable resources. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Kate Hagan
Executive Director
American Association of Law Libraries



Carla Funk
Executive Director
Medical Library Association



Douglas W. Newcomb
Chief Operating Officer
Special Libraries Association



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: Kate Hagan, (312) 205-8016



The Medical Library Association (MLA) is a nonprofit, educational organization with more than 4,000 health sciences information professional and institutional members worldwide. Founded in 1898, 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/>
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The Special Libraries Association (SLA) is a nonprofit global organization for innovative information professionals and their strategic partners. SLA serves about 10,000 members in 75 countries in the information profession, including corporate, academic, and government information specialists. SLA promotes and strengthens its members through learning, advocacy, and networking initiatives. www.sla.org
Contact: Doug Newcomb, (703) 647-4923