

Joint MLA/AAHSL Legislative Task Force

2009 Annual Report

The Joint Legislative Task Force supports advocacy efforts of AAHSL and MLA and consists of membership from both organizations. Ex-officio members from AAHSL who serve during their appointed AAHSL terms include the current president and chair of the Scholarly Communications Committee. The position of chair rotates between the two organizations every two years. Michael Homan served as vice-chair from November 2008 to November 2009 and will continue as vice-chair until 2010. Hope Barton from MLA currently serves as chair. Key Washington support for this joint program is provided by the Health and Medicine Council of Washington (HMCW) funded by both organizations and by MLA Legislative Staff Liaison, Mary Langman. The task force normally meets biannually in Washington, DC to conduct business and to meet with members of Congress or their staff according to schedules prepared by HMCW.

Meetings

Spring Task Force Meeting: March 23-24, 2009

- Reports were presented by Betsy Humphreys, Deputy Director, NLM; Jerry Sheehan, Assistant Director for Policy Development, NLM; Elaine Rubin, Vice President Policy and Program, Association of Academic Health Centers; Dale Dirks, President, Health and Medicine Counsel of Washington.
- The task force approved establishing a working group of MLA and AAHSL members to develop a health care reform statement, building upon the 1993 joint MLA/AAHSL Statement: *Health Care Reform and the Health Sciences Librarian*.
- Four teams of task force members visited Congressional offices to address issues of FY 2010 NLM funding, continued support for the NIH Public Access Policy, and healthcare reform.

Fall Task Force Meeting:

A fall Task Force meeting was not scheduled due to budgetary considerations. A virtual meeting will be scheduled for the first quarter of 2010, and the - spring 2010 meeting will occur in conjunction with the Washington MLA Annual Meeting in May. An attempt to visit with key staff of the new Academic Medicine Caucus in the House of Representatives will be scheduled for the May 2010 Task Force meeting.

Statements

MLA/AAHSL Statements:

The task force was involved in developing a number of statements about healthcare reform, funding, and the NIH public access policy which the MLA and AAHSL boards approved.

- To the Obama Transition Team, “Three Meaningful Principles of Healthcare Reform” (December 31, 2008) http://www.mlanet.org/government/gov_pdf/2009-jan_hlth%20rfrm%20princ.pdf
- To the Obama Transition Team, “The NIH Public Access Policy Advances Science and Promotes Healthy People” (January 16, 2009) http://www.mlanet.org/government/gov_pdf/2009-jan_nih%20pley_stmnt.pdf
- To the House Judiciary Committee in support of the NIH Public Access Policy in response to H.R. 801 (February 24, 2009) http://www.mlanet.org/government/gov_pdf/2009_feb_conyers_ltrr.pdf
- To the House Labor-HHS-Education & Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee in support of NLM’s FY 2010 funding (March 16, 2009) http://www.mlanet.org/government/gov_pdf/2009_mar_mla_testimony.pdf

- In July, the MLA and AAHSL boards approved a joint statement, “Health Sciences Libraries and Health Care Reform: Providing Quality Information for Improved Health.” Working group members appointed to develop the statement included: Hope Barton, Co-Chair, Michael Homan, Co-Chair, Logan Ludwig, Jane Blumenthal, Donna Timm, Barbara Epstein, Dale Dirks, Mary Langman
http://mlanet.org/government/gov_pdf/2009_july_hlthcarereform.pdf

Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Statements:

Statements by the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research originate with the Ad Hoc Group. MLA and AAHSL are requested to “sign on” as supporting organizations. The 2008-2009 statements included the following.

- Obama Transition Team in support of the NIH (December 16, 2008)
<http://www.aamc.org/advocacy/healthfunding/correspondence/>
- Congress urging them to consider the benefits to the economy of providing funding increases for health agencies and programs within the FY 09 Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations bill (December 19, 2008) <http://www.aamc.org/advocacy/healthfunding/correspondence/>
- Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) urging him to secure the highest funding levels for all discretionary health programs contained in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (February 11, 2009) <http://www.aamc.org/advocacy/healthfunding/correspondence/>
- To Congress on budget function 5550 (March 25, 2009)
<http://www.aamc.org/advocacy/healthfunding/correspondence/>
- To the chairs and ranking members of the House and Senate Appropriations Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittees urging support for a robust increase in FY 10 NIH funding (July 8, 2009).
<http://www.aamc.org/research/adhocgp/070809.pdf>

Action Alerts

Action alerts were distributed via MLA-FOCUS and through the Joint Legislative Task Force and AAHSL distribution lists urging support for NIH funding, the NIH Public Access Policy, orphan works legislation, and FRPAA. Action alerts are tracked on the MLANET website under Advocacy & Policy (see: <http://mlanet.org/government/>), and distributed through MLA-FOCUS and the task force and AAHSL distribution list.

Legislative Priorities

Congressional activity and legislation is vast and requires the Task Force to establish priorities which focus on legislation most important to AAHSL and MLA. During 2008 and 2009 the following were Task Force legislative priorities for purposes of tracking and developing position statements and letters of support.

I. National Health Information Policy

- NLM Funding
- IMLS Funding
- Healthcare Reform
- Intellectual Property and Copyright Law
 - Library of Congress Section 108 Study Group
 - Orphan Works Legislation
 - FAIR USE Act of 2007 (H.R. 1201)

II. Health Care and Public Health Information Resources

Healthcare Reform
Telemedicine and Telehealth
Patient Privacy
Public Access to Government Information
 NIH Public Access Policy
 Federal Research Public Access Act (FRPPA)
 H.R. 801—*Fair Copyright in research Works Act of 2009*
 Fiscal Year 2009 Interior, Environment, & Related Agencies
 Appropriations
 Environmental Protection Agency Libraries
Consumer and Patient Health Information
 Labor, HHS Appropriations
 P.L. 110-85, FDA Amendments Act of 2007 related to expansion of
 clinicaltrials.gov (also known as the *Fair Access to Clinical Trials Act of*
 2007, S. 467) (FACT Act)
International Health Professional Access to Health Information Resources
 S. 805, the African Health Capacity Investment Act of 2007

III. Health Research Information Resources

Healthcare Reform

IV. Health Education Information Resources

Healthcare Reform

V. Health Information Technologies and Bioinformatics

Healthcare Reform

NIH Roadmap Initiative, including: NIH Roadmap for Medical
Research/Common Fund; Multidisciplinary Collaborative Research
Clinical Research Translation; and Training New Clinical Researchers and
Bioinformatics Professionals
Interoperable Health information Technology Infrastructure

Committee Personnel

MLA Members

Hope Barton (6/06-5/10), Chair
Barbara Epstein, AHIP, (6/08-5/12)
Carla J. Funk, MLA Executive Director
Connie Schardt, AHIP, MLA President (6/09-5/10)
Julie A. Schneider (6/07-5/11)
Patricia L. Thibodeau, AHIP, FMLA (6/07-5/10)

Mary M. Langman, Staff Liaison

AAHSL Members

J. Michael Homan, AHIP, FMLA
 Chair (11/06-11/08)
 Vice-Chair (11/08-11/10)
Jane Blumenthal, AHIP (11/07-11/11)
Sandra Franklin, AHIP (11/05-11/09)
Regina Kenny Marone, AHIP (11/08-
 11/12)
Karen Butter, AHIP, ex officio (11/06-
 11/09)
Julia Sollenberger, FMLA, AAHSL
 President (11/08-11/09)

Washington Representatives

Health and Medicine Counsel of Washington, Washington, DC

Dale Dirks, President

This report is informational and requires no action by the AAHSL Board of Directors.