



# ALA American Library Association

November 12, 2008

The Honorable Barak Obama  
President-Elect of the United States  
713 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear President-Elect Obama:

On behalf of the American Library Association (ALA) and its 66,000 members, it is an honor and pleasure to congratulate you on your election as President of the United States.

The ALA is dedicated to enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all citizens of this nation. We stand ready to partner with you in your plans to revitalize our nation's economy, including efforts to help unemployed and underemployed Americans become part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce.

In order to compete effectively in the global market, all our citizens must possess modern-day literacy skills and be able to participate fully in the challenges and demands of a complex information society. Everyone must have access to the ever-expanding universe of tools, services and resources available on the Internet. Yet, in 73 percent of our communities, the public library provides the only no-fee access for Internet service. In rural America, the rate goes up to 83 percent.

We share your commitment to making broadband available to every community in America through a combination of reform of the Universal Service Fund; better use of the nation's wireless spectrum; promotion of next-generation facilities, technologies and applications; and new tax and loan incentives. We are actively working in these areas already and look forward to helping make them reality under the Obama Administration.

Your election opens new doors of hope and opportunity for all Americans. It provides the catalyst we need to make so many changes possible. The ALA is proud to stand as a partner with you in working for change. We look forward to a long and productive working relationship on behalf of our nation's citizens.

With warmest regards,

Jim Rettig  
President, American Library Association