

August 14, 2015

**Senator Jeff Merkley**

313 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Merkley,

With the pending retirement of James Billington, Librarian of Congress, you and your colleagues have an excellent opportunity to confirm a new librarian who will be a strong leader and a capable manager with the diverse skill set demanded by today's complex information rich environment. Mr. Billington has been at the helm of the Library of Congress (LOC) since 1987, so this nomination is critical in setting direction for the LOC in coming years.

The library community of Oregon encourages you to look for a nominee that can propel the LOC into a stronger and more progressive leadership role in sharing our nation's great information legacy and future. We suggest that you consider the following skills and attributes when reviewing nominees:

- While a library degree is not required, there has not been a trained librarian in the position in forty years. The Librarian should at least have a deep understanding of libraries and information science.
- Technology changes, but the need to engage with it does not. The Librarian must know how to use technology to promote civic engagement and to interact with Congress and the library community.
- Technology does indeed change, so the Librarian should have the ability to embrace technological innovation. This includes knowing how to recruit and retain others to manage the LOC's technology dependent projects and operations.
- As both a leader and a manager, the Librarian needs to inspire people and create a positive work culture. The LOC should not only be a good place to work; it should be the place any librarian would want to work.
- The Librarian, as all good librarians, must be committed to the idea of service to the community services, in this case, the American people and those who govern.

Of course, there are also actions that we would like the next Librarian to address. To do so, that person needs the attributes and skills noted above as well as the commitment to work with the library community in Oregon and the rest of the country.

1. Advocate for fair use in copyright and reasonable updates to copyright law.
2. Share as many LOC resources and collections as possible, as this models for others the great benefits for our society and its cultural heritage institutions.
3. Make the Congressional Research Service reports available to the public. These are created with public funds and should be available to the public.
4. Address the 31 recommendations from the Government Accountability Office's report published in March 2015, the foremost being the hiring of a Chief Information Officer.

The LOC is the library for the country. Oregonians treasure this national institution and the Oregon library community looks to the LOC for access to remarkable collections and unique expertise. We would like a Librarian of Congress who can effectively advocate for issues that affect our daily services such as copyright, public access to cultural content, open access to scholarly communication and digital best practices. The LOC is not a warehouse of books but a national treasure that requires a firm hand to manage its assets and guide it through the current complex virtual and physical information landscape. On behalf of the Oregon library community we encourage you to be actively involved in the nomination process for our next Librarian of Congress.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jane Corry".

Jane Corry  
President, Oregon Library Association