

WLA Intellectual Freedom SIG Updates

June 12, 2026 | Sara Gold & Teresa Schmidt, co-chairs

Proposed federal rule change

Proposed changes to federal spending rules ([2 CFR 200](#)) would give the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) final control over the release of federal grants and funding across government agencies. OMB is part of the Executive Branch and its leadership is appointed by the president.

- [Full text of the revision](#)
- AP News: [White House moves to give political appointees more power over federal grants](#)
- Scientific American: [White House proposes new rules giving political appointees final approval on research grants](#)
- Wiley Law (a private law firm) has a nice bullet point summary of key provisions: [OMB Proposes Sweeping Overhaul of Federal Assistance Regulations](#)

A 45-day period for comments is open now, and will be closed on July 13, 2026: [Regulation for Federal Financial Assistance](#).

Legislative updates

- The [House Appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education](#) includes continued funding for IMLS.
 - Passed out of committee 6/5/2026 on a party-line vote. The bill includes about 10% reduced funding for the Department of Education.
 - The executive budget proposal reduces the IMLS budget to zero, as it did each year during the first administration.
- [HR 7661](#): “Stop the Sexualization of Children Act”
 - Introduced 2/24/2026; passed out of Committee on Education and Workforce 3/17/2026, 18-13.
 - Prohibits schools receiving federal ESEA funds from providing literature that “includes sexually oriented material.”
 - Uses vague, confusing, and likely unconstitutional language to define sexually oriented material. Includes anything that “involves gender dysphoria or transgenderism.”
 - Limits the definition of “classic works of literature” to a list from *Encyclopaedia Britannica* published in 1990 and lists published by Compass Classroom, a provider of Christian homeschool resources; and limits “Classic Works of Art” to a guide to AP Art History published in 2020.
 - [ALA Statement](#)
 - Currently no action requested by WLA.

- Increased activity around legislation addressing the cost of digital materials for libraries:
 - Library Journal Info Docket: [DC Passes e-Book Fairness law](#)
 - Similar legislation is progressing in [Rhode Island](#), but on hold in [Illinois](#) after the end of the legislative session.
- [HR 8235](#): Books Save Lives Act
 - Introduced 4/9/2026; referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce
 - Schools receiving federal funding would be required to staff a library with a trained librarian and maintain a diverse collection of books.
- [HR 2616](#): “Stopping Indoctrination and Protecting Kids”
 - Passed the House on 5/20/2026
 - Requires elementary and middle schools receiving public funds to obtain parental consent before changing a minor's gender markers, pronouns, or preferred name on any school form or sex-based accommodations, including locker rooms or bathrooms.

State legislative action

- [Wisconsin AB961](#) – Requiring warning labels for explicit content. Passed in Assembly 2/19/2026; failed to concur in the Senate.
- ALA [Legislation in the States](#) tracker: includes adverse legislation and Right to Read legislation
- [EveryLibrary Pro-Library Legislation in 2026](#)
- [EveryLibrary Legislation of Concern in 2026](#)
- Utah’s book banning law has resulted in 34 titles under a statewide ban, most of which have been instigated by just two districts in the state. [Salt Lake Tribune Article 5/14/2026](#)
- Iowa SF 496 (commonly referred to as a “don’t say gay” bill) is now in force after preliminary injunctions were overturned by the Eighth Circuit court, in a ruling that cited *Little v. Llano*. [From an article in Little Village](#), “According to the Eighth Circuit panel, “The First Amendment does not guarantee students the right to access books of their choosing at taxpayer expense.”” Litigation continues. (ACLU of Iowa provides a [timeline of the bill](#).)

Recent court decisions

- [What now? Libraries after Little v. Llano County](#) – ALA, 1/30/2026. Includes a printable three-page summary.
 - The Supreme Court did not *affirm* the Fifth Circuit decision, but it did decline to review the case.
 - The en banc decision only applies to the Fifth Circuit (Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi).
 - The court did not hold that library collections are “government speech.” Only 7 of 17 members of the full court held that opinion.
- [What Mahmoud v. Taylor Means for Your Library](#) – ALA, 10/22/2025. Includes a printable two-page summary.
 - Affirms parents’ right to opt their children out of storybooks read in a public school’s language arts curriculum.
 - Does not require the removal of books from the school library.

Other Resources

- [WLA Intellectual Freedom Committee](#)
- [CCBC Intellectual Freedom Resources](#)
- [ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom \(OIF\)](#)
- [United for Libraries](#): Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations
- [Unite Against Book Bans](#)
- [EveryLibrary Legislative Landscape for Libraries report](#), July 2025