TO: THE RUSA/SECTION MEMBERSHIP
FROM: Full Name, Membership Position/Leadership Position
DATE: DD/MM/YYYY
RE: PROPOSED CHANGES TO RUSA/SECTION CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

The following amendments to the RUSA/SECTION Constitution & Bylaws have been approved by RUSA Leadership Council for referral to the Membership for ratification in accordance with the RUSA/SECTION bylaws, Articles ## and ###. Any text to be deleted is shown in [brackets]; new text to be inserted or substituted is underlined.

ALA Policy 4.8 states “Amendments to the Constitution and/or Bylaws, when placed on the ballot, will be accompanied by pro and con statements of not more than 250 words each, such statements to be prepared by two Council members (who voted on opposite sides of the issue as indicated by their voting record) appointed by the president.”

ITEM #1-

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT TO CLARIFY LANGUAGE REGARDING AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS.

ACTION: To Amend Constitution Article X, Affiliated Organizations and Chapters, Sections 1 and 2, to state:

Section 1. National or international organizations having purposes similar to those of the Association or to one or more of the Association’s subdivisions may request to become an affiliate of the Association. Requests for affiliation are subject to Council’s approval.

Section 2. The Association or any subdivision thereof may request to become an affiliate with national or international organizations having purposes similar to those of the Association or to one or more of the Association’s subdivisions. However, no subdivision of the Association may separately affiliate itself with an organization with which the Association is affiliated. Requests for affiliation are subject to Council’s approval.

CURRENT LANGUAGE:

Section 1 The Council may by vote affiliate with the American Library Association or with any subdivision thereof upon its request, any national or international organization having purposes similar to those of the Association or its subdivision. The dues of affiliated organizations shall be as provided in the Bylaws.

Section 2. The Council may by vote affiliate the Association, or any subdivision thereof upon its request, with any national or international organization having purposes similar to those of the Association or its subdivision; provided, however, that no subdivision of the Association may separately affiliate itself with an organization with which the Association as a whole is affiliated.
PROPOSED LANGUAGE:

[Section 1. The Council may by vote affiliate with the American Library Association or with any subdivision thereof upon its request, any national or international organization having purposes similar to those of the Association or its subdivision. The dues of affiliated organizations shall be as provided in the Bylaws.

Section 2. The Council may by vote affiliate the Association, or any subdivision thereof upon its request, with any national or international organization having purposes similar to those of the Association or its subdivision; provided, however, that no subdivision of the Association may separately affiliate itself with an organization with which the Association as a whole is affiliated.]

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Section 2. The Association or any subdivision thereof may request to become an affiliate with national or international organizations having purposes similar to those of the Association or to one or more of the Association’s subdivisions. However no subdivision of the Association may separately affiliate itself with an organization with which the Association is affiliated. Requests for affiliation are subject to Council’s approval.

PRO:

Two affirmative votes of Council at consecutive meetings are required to pass an amendment to the ALA Constitution. Your elected representatives to ALA Council have twice unanimously voted in favor of this language improvement. This modification updates the ALA Constitution Article X:

1. To more clearly express affiliation requirements for "outside" (i.e. non-ALA) associations that wish to formally affiliate their organization(s) with ALA (Section 1); and
2. To more clearly express affiliation requirements for ALA and its units wishing to formally affiliate with "outside" (i.e. non-ALA) organizations (Section 2).

Your vote to approve this recommendation as an ALA member will codify the more-clearly expressed language describing affiliation requirements. Voting for this change will not increase your dues nor result in any disenfranchisement of current or future members or elected representatives.

Please vote "Yes" to approve clarifying the affiliation requirements codified in the ALA Constitution.

Jenna Nemec-Loise, ALSC Division Councilor
CON:

There were no dissenting votes in Council.

ITEM #2-

**BYLAW AMENDMENT TO CLARIFY THAT NO CANDIDATE MAY RUN FOR MORE THAN ONE COUNCIL POSITION IN THE SAME ELECTION.**

**ACTION:** To Amend Bylaws Article III, Nominations and Elections, Section 1.e., to state:

No person may be nominated for or serve on the Council unless that person is a personal member of the American Library Association. No candidate may run for more than one Council position in the same election.

**CURRENT LANGUAGE:**

Bylaws Article III, Nominations and Elections, Section 1.e

No person may be nominated for or serve on the Council unless that person is a personal member of the American Library Association; no candidate may accept nomination from more than one group.

**PROPOSED LANGUAGE:**

Bylaws Article III, Nominations and Elections, Section 1.e

No person may be nominated for or serve on the Council unless that person is a personal member of the American Library Association; no candidate may accept nomination from more than one group. **No candidate may run for more than one Council position in the same election.**

**PRO:**

The ALA Constitution and Bylaws Committee, at the 2016 Annual Meeting in Orlando, FL discussed changing the language of Article III, Section 1(e) of the Bylaws to provide greater clarity regarding current practices surrounding ALA members running for ALA Council. The current wording states “No person may be nominated for or serve on the Council unless that person is a personal member of the American Library Association; no candidate may accept nomination from more than one group.” The Committee held that the second clause was ambiguous, as members can either petition to run for ALA Council and collect the requisite number of signatures to be placed on the ballot, be nominated by the Nominating Committee, or elected by a chapter, division, or round table. Members cannot, however, run as an at-large candidate and be seated as an elected member from a chapter, division, or round table in the
same election. Therefore, the Committee unanimously resolved that the Association modify the second clause of this section to “no candidate may run for more one Council position in the same election.” This solidifies the intent of the original language, while making the language more clear in light of current practices. ALA Council, at the 2016 Annual meeting, concurred with the Committee’s recommendation, and approved this change to be placed on the 2017 ballot.

Matthew P. Ciszek, ALA Councilor-at-Large

CON:

There were no dissenting votes in Council.

ITEM #3-

BYLAW AMENDMENT INCREASING THE NUMBER OF SIGNATURES NEEDED ON PETITIONS FOR THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT-ELECT AND TREASURER.

ACTION: To Amend Bylaws Article III, Nominations and Elections, Section 3.b., to state:

The ALA Nominating Committee shall also include on the official ballot other nominations filed with the executive director by petition of any two hundred (200) members of the Association for the positions of President-elect or Treasurer and twenty-five members of the Association for the position of Councilor-at-Large at least four months before the annual conference, provided written consent of these nominees shall have been filed with the executive director of the Association.

CURRENT LANGUAGE:

The ALA Nominating Committee shall also include on the official ballot other nominations filed with the executive director by petition of any twenty-five members of the Association at least four months before the annual conference, provided written consent of these nominees shall have been filed with the executive director of the Association.

PROPOSED CHANGE (new language underlined):

The ALA Nominating Committee shall also include on the official ballot other nominations filed with the executive director by petition of any two hundred (200) members of the Association for the positions of President-elect and Treasurer, and twenty-five (25) members of the Association for the position of Councilor-at-Large, at least four months before the annual conference, provided written consent of these nominees shall have been filed with the executive director of the Association.
PRO:

This bylaws amendment would raise the petition threshold for the positions of ALA President-Elect and ALA Treasurer from 25 signatures to 200 signatures. The 2016 ALA Election Process Task Force, who brought this recommendation forward, investigated historical data on signatures received by petition candidates and determined that 200 was an appropriate requirement given the prominence of the positions.

The officers must represent the membership of the Association broadly. Nominated candidates are vetted by the Nominating Committee to ensure their capacity for wide representation. In the same vein, petition candidates must display sufficient support from the membership-at-large to be placed on the ballot. Further, the standing 25-signature requirement was established when petition signatures were gathered on paper forms; now that petitioning is electronic, candidates may gather support more easily from across the Association. A 200-signature threshold balances the ease of gathering electronic signatures with the gravity of the elected positions and with the work of the Nominating Committee.

Tyler Dzuba, Councilor-at-Large

CON:

This amendment creates lopsided requirements for nominations. The positions of ALA President-Elect, Treasurer, and Councilor-at-Large each serve the entire membership. In this way, they are equally important for our governance. Why should one position require 200 signatures on a petition and the other only 25?

The ALA Nominating Committee works hard each year to identify the best in our association to run for these positions. However, this group of people cannot possibly represent the entire membership. We can both respect the nominations of our colleagues on this committee while welcoming petition candidates.

This increase in signatures adds an arbitrary barrier to becoming nominated, particularly for newer members who may not have a large network within the association. If the purpose of petitioning is to get on the ballot, then our members should be left to decide who is elected. Our ALA is about equity, diversity, and inclusion. This increase in signatures is contrary to that core value and will effectively sideline some of our newer or younger members who share our passion and could bring new ideas into our governance.

Erica Findley, Councilor-at-Large