

June 17, 2013

The Honorable Darrell Steinberg
President Pro Tem
California State Senate

The Honorable Bob Huff
Minority Leader
California State Senate

Dear President Pro Tem Steinberg and Minority Leader Huff:

On behalf of these nine national and regional library, publishing, research and advocacy organizations, we write to express our support for (AB) 609, the Taxpayer Access to Publicly Funded Research Act. This bill will benefit California taxpayers - students and teachers, business owners and entrepreneurs - by ensuring that peer-reviewed scientific articles reporting on research funded by the State of California can be freely accessed and fully used by all of California's taxpayers.

Timely, barrier-free access to the results of state funded research is an essential component of Californian's collective investment in science. The increased sharing and use of this information will help to advance the pace of discovery, as well as to speed the translation of this knowledge into innovative new services and products – fueling economic growth, and helping to create jobs.

The establishment of open digital repositories, containing state funded research, will create an unprecedented, valuable new resource for researchers – and all interested members of the public – to tap into.

AB609 is a cost-effective measure based on a proven model – the public access policy of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which was the first U.S. agency to require public access to taxpayer-funded research. Since its implementation five years ago, the NIH policy has resulted in an average of 90,000 new biomedical manuscripts being made publicly available each year. Demand for this information is extremely high, with more than 800,000 unique users accessing material from this repository each weekday.

AB 609 creates opportunities for unprecedented access to state funded research, while at the same time providing appropriate safeguards to protect the interests of those who contribute to the validity and quality of research results – striking a careful balance among all stakeholder interests.

We agree that policies for access to articles should standardize their compliance requirements as much as possible, and AB 609 meets this critical requirement by requiring funded researchers to deposit articles at the time of acceptance by a peer reviewed journal. This action point is critical for minimizing the compliance burden on funded researchers; an automated function can then be set by the host repository to ensure that the article is made public when the embargo period expires.

AB 609 reflects the growing worldwide trend of government and higher education institutions actively working to maximize access to and sharing of research results. This legislation will help broaden access to important research that is now unavailable to the public at a time when the demand for wider access is reaching a critical high.

As libraries, scientists, researchers and publishers, we firmly believe that this legislation will result in the acceleration of scientific progress, improve the quality of education in California, and lead to important benefits to the U.S. economy – including the creation of new jobs in a broad range of sectors that depend on access to scientific research to innovate.

We firmly support the Taxpayer Access to Publicly Funded Research Act, and urge all members of the California State Senate to support AB 609.

Sincerely,



Association of College and Research Libraries

www.acrl.org

Contact: Kara Malenfant (312-280-2510)



American Library Association

www.ala.org

Contact: Jessica McGilvray (202-628-8410)



Association of Research Libraries

www.arl.org

Contact: Prudence Adler (202-296-2296)



Coalition of Open Access Policy Institutions (COAPI)

Coordinating Group – on behalf of the Coalition

www.sparc.arl.org/about/COAPI/

Contact: Andrew Wesolek, Co-coordinator (435) 797-2650



Creative Commons

www.creativecommons.org

Contact: Tim Vollmer (650-294-4732)



Electronic Frontier Foundation

www.eff.org

Contact: Corynne McSherry (415-436-9333)



Public Library of Science

www.plos.org

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Public Knowledge

www.publicknowledge.org

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SPARC (Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition)

www.arl.org/sparc

Contact: Heather Joseph (202-296-2296)