The Fiscal Cliff, the 113th Congress and You - How What’s Happening in DC Might Impact the Library Community

A Webinar from ALA’s Washington Office

Have no fear! We’ll explain muting, Q&A and other details when we start.
Topics

- About the Online Training Session
- Who’s Speaking?
- What’s the “Fiscal Cliff”
- The 2012 Fiscal Cliff Deal
- The 113th Congress
- The Advocacy Plan
About the Online Training Session

- What’s happening?
- Muting
- Q&A
- Recording and Follow-Up Materials
Who’s Speaking?

Stephanie Vance, Advocacy Guru
- Former Capitol Hill Staff
- Lobbyist
- Author of 5 books on advocacy including the recently released “The Influence Game: 50 Insider Tactics from the Washington D.C. Lobbying World That Will Get You to Yes”
The Fiscal Cliff
How it ties together

- Tax
- Unemployment Insurance
- Future Spending
- Sequestration
- Debt Ceiling?
The Fiscal Cliff Deal

Jan. 2, 2013

The outcome of last-minute negotiations to avoid the fiscal cliff. By Chris Heitman and Mattea Kramer

At the eleventh hour, Congress and President Obama reached a deal to address the fiscal cliff. As our analysis shows, the deal focused on tax revenue and included a number of changes to the tax code, including a permanent extension of the Bush-era tax cuts on income below $400,000 for families and below $400,000 for individuals.

This deal left major taxes unchanged, including the debt ceiling, the automatic spending cuts known as sequestration, and a final version of a budget to fund the federal government in the current fiscal year.

What's in the Fiscal Cliff Deal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Issue</th>
<th>What Happened</th>
<th>What It Means</th>
<th>What's Next</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bush-Era Tax Cuts</td>
<td>Congress permanently extended tax cuts for individuals earning under $400,000 and $400,000 for couples, and raised the rate on capital gains and dividends from 15 percent to 20 percent.</td>
<td>Bush-era rates become permanent for middle-class taxpayers and many wealthy Americans, while tax rates rise for a group roughly corresponding to the wealthiest 1 percent of households.</td>
<td>Changes are permanent. If Congress remedies the issue by taking up comprehensive tax reform.</td>
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<td>Payroll-Tax Holiday</td>
<td>As a result of a payroll-tax holiday enacted in 2010, workers have temporarily paid payroll taxes at a rate of 4.2 percent instead of 6.2 percent.</td>
<td>The payroll-tax holiday expires.</td>
<td>The expiration is permanent.</td>
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<td>Unemployment Benefits</td>
<td>Emergency unemployment benefits for the long-term unemployed were scheduled to expire on Dec. 31.</td>
<td>Congress extended unemployment benefits for another year.</td>
<td>The unemployment rate remains high at the end of 2013; legislation will likely revisit this issue next December.</td>
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<td>Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit</td>
<td>Congress extended the expansion of both tax credits for five years.</td>
<td>Eligible families will continue to benefit from both tax credits.</td>
<td>The extension will expire in 2013.</td>
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<td>Estate Tax</td>
<td>At the start of 2013, the estate tax rate</td>
<td>The estate tax will rise from the current rate.</td>
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## Fiscal Cliff and Libraries

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bush-Era Tax Cuts</td>
<td>Extended for all individuals making under $400K</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>May be revisited as part of tax reform</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charitable Deductions</td>
<td>Short-term victory on extension</td>
<td>No near term impact</td>
<td>Potential for more discussion and potential reductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll Tax</td>
<td>Tax “holiday” <em>not</em> extended</td>
<td>All American workers will see 2% reduction in take-home pay</td>
<td>This issue will probably not be revisited</td>
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*Note: *The Payroll Tax “holiday” was not extended, which means workers will see a 2% reduction in their take-home pay. This issue is unlikely to be revisited.*
# Fiscal Cliff and Libraries

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<tr>
<td>Unemployment Benefits</td>
<td>Extended until December 31, 2013</td>
<td>Impact as related to library job search services</td>
<td>To be revisited in December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limits on Tax Deductions</td>
<td>Individuals over 200K and couple over 250K exemptions are reduced</td>
<td>May impact giving thresholds</td>
<td>May be revisited as part of tax reform</td>
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# Fiscal Cliff and Libraries

|------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Spending Cuts    | • Small potential amount but over a shorter time frame  
• Funding levels must be reached through cuts & revenues  
• Actual decisions postponed until March 1\(^{st}\) | Potential for dramatic cuts to IMLS, LSTA, GPO and other programs | Must be addressed before March 1st |
# Fiscal Cliff and Libraries

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<td>FY2013 Funding</td>
<td>Congress did not address</td>
<td>Uncertainty over the remainder of the year</td>
<td>Must be addressed by March 1st</td>
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<td>Debt Ceiling</td>
<td>Congress did not address</td>
<td>Currently none unless ceiling is reached and not extended</td>
<td>Must be addressed by mid-February</td>
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So Where Does That Leave Us? Congress and Cockroaches

Congress somewhere below cockroaches, traffic jams, and Nickelback in Americans' esteem

Our newest national poll finds that Congress only has a 9% favorability rating with 85% of voters viewing it in a negative light. We've seen poll after poll after poll over the last year talking about how unpopular Congress is but really, what's the difference between an 11% or a 9% or a 7% favorability rating? So we decided to take a different approach and test Congress' popularity against 26 different things. And what we found is that Congress is less popular than cockroaches, traffic jams, and even Nickelback.

Here's what we found:

It's gross to have lice but at least they can be removed in a way that given the recent reelection rates members of Congress evidently can't: Lice 67 Congress 19

Brussel sprouts may have been disgusting as a kid, but evidently they're now a lot less disgusting than Congress: Brussel Sprouts 69 Congress 23

The NFL replacement refs may have screwed everything up, but voters think Congress is screwing everything up even worse: Replacement Refs 56 Congressmen 29 (the breakdown among Packers fans might be a little bit different).
On the Positive Side…

Libraries Respond to Hurricane Sandy, Offering Refuge, WiFi, and Services to Needy Communities

By Sarah Rollyson, with reporting by Shelley Vale and Melanie Dar

At the New Canaan Library, left, a tech petting zoo became a changing station; center left, watching a DVD in the graphics room; center, left side coffee.

About 30 people were waiting to get into the Princeton Public Library (PPL) when it managed to open its doors at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 29, the morning after Hurricane Sandy hit. It was a warm, windless day, and visitors were greeted by a skeleton staff and volunteers who were able to handle their requests, mostly on the first floor. A couple of laptops with a selection of books and a few taiko drums were set up in the library’s reading room. The library was open from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Meanwhile, the New Canaan (CT) Library was also open, packed, and bustling on Tuesday—decorating…

The WILL Act

WILL Act Reinroduced in House

Last week, Representative Rush Holt (D-NJ) reintroduced H.R. 113, the Workforce Investment through Local Libraries (WILL) Act for the 113th Congress. This legislation proposes including libraries in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), and is co-sponsored by Rep. Earl Grijalva (D-AZ), and Rep. Jared Polis (CO-D).

H.R. 113 is the exact same WILL Act bill that was introduced in the 112th Congress in April, 2011. This legislation will amend the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to include library representation on state and local workforce investment boards as well as assume coordination of employment, training, and literacy services carried out by public libraries. Furthermore, H.R. 113 also recognizes public libraries as an allowable “One-Stop” partner and authorizes new demonstration and pilot projects to establish employment resources in public libraries. This will allow library users access to workforce activities and information related to training services and employment opportunities, including but not limited to resume development, job bank web searches, literacy services, and workshops on career information. The goal of the WILL Act is to allow libraries access to WIA funds to continue to provide job search support in communities all across America.

The ALA Washington Office would like to thank Reps. Holt, Grijalva, and Polis for their continued support of libraries in reintroducing this legislation in this new Congress.

Libraries and Hurricane Sandy

The WILL Act
Additional Potential Agenda Items 113th

Likely Top-of-Agenda Items

- WIA
- ESEA
How to Make a Difference
Step One: Understanding the Policy Agenda

- ALA’s Proactive Agenda
- ALA’s Reactive Agenda
- Where to Find Out...
Step Two: Know Your Legislators
Who is YOUR Legislator
Who are the Players?

Leaders
Committee Chairs
Committee Members
Rank & File
Who are the Types?

- Champions
- Supporters
- Neutrals
- Opponents
Specific Questions to Answer About Legislators

- What kind of player are they?
- What type are they?
- Committee Situation
- Your Connections
- Policy Interests
- Re-election percentage
- Campaign finance situation
- What gets them up in the morning and keeps them up at night
What to Know About YOURSELF

• How many people use your library daily? Weekly? Monthly?
• How many people use your computer terminals? Are they using them to find jobs? Start businesses? Engage in lifelong learning activities?
• What programs are most popular in your library?
• Do you have a high number of disabled or elderly people in your community? Are there reading for the blind services, for example, that you provide?
• How many children, students and young adults use your library? What are some of the special services you provide to them?
• Do you have a high percentage of nonnative English speakers? Do you need to provide special materials for them?
• Do you have a large college or business at the center of your community? Does your library help serve them?
Hello, my name is [] and I’m from [] (establishes relevancy)

I am here to talk to you about [policy / relationship ask]

Knowing of your interest in [info about your audience] I think you’ll be interested as well

This is important to the people I represent because [personal story]

That’s why I really hope you’ll [ask]

I’d like to follow-up by [follow-up ideas]

Can I get contact information for all the appropriate people in your office?
Delivering the Message. DO IT! NOW!

Join Mobile Commons by texting “library” to 877877

Check www.ala.org/wo for
• E-mail center
• District dispatch
• Legislative day information
Most Important: Making Connections
Through ALA’s Legislative Day

National Library Legislative Day (NLLD)

Save the date: National Library Legislative Day 2013 will be held May 7 & 8 at the Liaison Hotel in Washington, DC.

- Promote NLLD at your library (pdf)
- Funding opportunity (WRLC/CLF)
- Register
- ALA Legislative Scorecards

Related
- NLLD posts on District Dispatch
- One State’s Experience at National Library Legislative Day
- Advocacy Spotlight
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