

An Update on Filtering
—Focusing on Use of IMLS Funds from the CARES Act
(July 2, 2020)

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act, PL 116-136) in late March 2020. This \$2 trillion economic relief package included \$50 million allocated to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Of this funding, IMLS allocated \$30 million to State Library Agencies and made another \$15 million available in grants to museums and libraries.¹ These funds can be used to respond to the pandemic in a variety of ways, including the expansion of Internet access by lending Wi-Fi hotspots and Internet accessible devices such as laptops and tablets. This Internet connectivity funding is especially important because much of the population will continue their education and work from home on a full-time or part-time basis for the foreseeable future.

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The American Library Association has not changed its stance on CIPA as a result of the IMLS CARES Act funding. While ALA opposes filters that block constitutionally protected speech,⁵ it also acknowledges that libraries are governed by local boards that make decisions based on local considerations.⁶ Thus ALA recognizes that the decision to comply—or not—with CIPA is ultimately a local decision.

Resources on CIPA and Filtering

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