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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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South Carolina State Library Institutional Membership with ALA

Columbia, S.C. –There has been media attention over the South Carolina State Library’s decision not to renew an institutional membership with the American Library Association (ALA). This press release is being issued as a means to clarify any misinformation and confusion in the media and public. A press release was not issued prior, and an announcement was not made regarding the decision not to renew our institutional membership with ALA, as this was purely a decision related to service issues. This decision was not influenced by any political group or affiliation, or state agency.

Libraries are non-partisan spaces that provide equal access to information and resources for all members of a community. Libraries are for everyone, and as such should have collections and programs which are balanced and represent all members of a community. It is imperative that public libraries provide access to books and resources which serve as mirrors and windows so that people may see themselves reflected in materials, and learn about those who may be different from them. All public library collection decisions are made at the local level and are not influenced by the State Library or ALA.

This decision has no impact on services provided by the State Library for libraries, librarians, teachers, students, caregivers, etc. All resources through the State Library remain intact. The South Carolina State Library continues to support the Freedom to Read, Intellectual Freedom, and ALA’s Code of Ethics for librarians. The South Carolina State Library’s guiding principle is to provide equal access to information for all South Carolinians.

The South Carolina State Library is not responsible for school library materials; please contact the Department of Education for any questions related to school libraries.

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About the S.C. State Library

The South Carolina State Library develops, supports, and sustains a thriving statewide community of learners committed to making South Carolina stronger. The Library serves the people of South Carolina by supporting state government and libraries to provide opportunities for learning in a changing environment. It is the primary administrator of federal and state support for the state’s libraries. In 1969, as the result of action by the General Assembly, the State Library Board was redesignated as the South Carolina State Library and assumed responsibility for public library development, library service for state institutions, service for the blind and physically handicapped, and library service to state government agencies. Headquartered in Columbia, S.C., the Library is funded by the state of South Carolina, by the federal government through the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and other sources. For more information, please visit statelibrary.sc.gov or call 803-734-8666.