**Request for OLA Statement on Equity Concern**

**Summary**

OLA has been approached by Karen Hill, Director of the Cornelius Public Library, to make a statement about a funding inequity in the Washington County Cooperative Library System (WCCLS) that is described in this [document](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FbZ26QjxcySGRNJdSfW0HmWlNd80t9xa/view?usp=sharing). She has indicated that she has been working with ALA’s Public Policy Office and media contacts on an advocacy campaign and this [news article](https://pamplinmedia.com/fgnt/36-news/527863-421940-cornelius-calls-on-washington-county-for-fair-library-funding) was published on November 11, 2021.

The OLA President sought further information from the WCCLS Manager and was pointed to [the statement on Equity Funding for Washington County Libraries](https://www.wccls.org/equity-funding-washington-county-libraries). The WCCLS Manager also described a community engagement process that will seek to identify needs of underprivileged groups in the county and address equity issues in its funding and governance structures over the next four years.

The OLA Leadership group (OLA President, President-Elect, and Past President) discussed the request. OLA does not typically get involved in local library policy and budgeting issues. However, [OLA’s strategic plan](https://www.olaweb.org/strategic-plan-2020-23) makes a commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and antiracism and to provide support to library staff seeking to address systemic inequities. The EDI Antiracism Committee’s [Toolkit](https://www.olaweb.org/ola-edi-antiracism-committee---HOME) and current work also encourages efforts to engage impacted communities when seeking solutions to inequities.

We reached out to the co-chairs of the OLA EDI Antiracism Committee for further discussion and advice. Because of the complexity of the issues involved, we feel it is necessary to also seek advice and feedback from the OLA Executive Board before taking any further action.