

# Library Legislative Day

Building a Common Agenda, Tuesday, February 16, 2010

---

TO: Library Legislative Day Registrants  
FROM: Paul Nelson, WLA LD&L Chair  
RE: "Building a Common Agenda" at Library Legislative Day

For this year's Library Legislative Day, the Library Development & Legislation (LD&L) committee decided to take a page from Patricia Cavill's advocacy playbook. Cavill is a librarian and consultant who has worked extensively with the American Library Association, the Canadian Library Association, the American Association of School Librarians and numerous other organizations in developing advocacy programs.

In her article, "The Importance of Creating a Common Agenda," Cavill makes two points that LD&L has used to guide and develop its approach to our own program of advocacy.

- People (i.e., legislators) do things for their reasons, not yours.
- People (i.e., legislators) pay attention to the things that they love and value.

And, for better or worse, that's how political agendas are developed. Legislators support issues for which they have a strong interest.

The challenge for us then is to find the points of alignment with our library agenda and that of our legislators. In his recent State of the State address, Governor Doyle has made it unmistakably clear what Wisconsin's priorities should be.

*"I stand before you tonight at a difficult time in America's history," Governor Doyle said. "We have been hit hard by an economic crisis – the depths of which we have not seen since the*

(MORE)



*Great Depression. I have a year left as Governor, and I want to be very clear about what my top priority will be. I will do everything I can to help our businesses create jobs and give our workers the opportunities to get those jobs. **Nothing is more important.*** (Emphasis added.)

To help members prepare for this year's Library Legislative Day, LD&L has created a set of communication materials that frame library needs as well as library value in terms legislators are familiar with. (And LD&L member Caroline Oldershaw deserves a special note of thanks for coordinating this project.) This "common agenda" approach ties library concerns to three key issues:

- Education
- Job Training & Economic Development
- Information Access & Technology

The details of this approach are presented in a series of issue sheets. Once you take a careful look at this material, you'll understand that we haven't created an entirely new library agenda. We've simply reformatted our issues into a "Common Agenda" arrangement. If you have any questions, please contact me at [bennel62@gmail.com](mailto:bennel62@gmail.com) or Lisa Strand at (608) 245-3640, [strand@scls.lib.wi.us](mailto:strand@scls.lib.wi.us).

Thank you for taking the time to review the materials and prepare for a successful Library Legislative Day.