



545 E. Tennessee St. ▪ Ste. 100-D ▪ Tallahassee, FL 32308 ▪ 850-270-9205 ▪ www.flalib.org

September 25, 2023

The Florida Library Association (FLA) is an independent non-profit organization with its own elected officers and bylaws. To support library service on a national level, FLA has had a long affiliation with the American Library Association (ALA) and is designated as a state chapter. As a chapter, FLA has a representative on the large ALA Council.

Similar to other organizations and associations (The American Bar Association, for example), chapters govern themselves while upholding a shared set of values that are not determined by one person. Through our chapter affiliation, FLA has access to the professional expertise of ALA staff and benefits from ALA's work to ensure that federal funds for libraries come to Florida. However, all FLA membership dues go to support continuing education and advocacy for Florida's school, academic, special, and public library workers. FLA's Board of Directors oversees and directs the vision, scope, and mission of our organization.

ALA states that "Chapters have the final authority within ALA for all programs and policies that concern only the area for which the chapter is responsible." FLA is that authority for Florida, not ALA.

ALA's President is an elected, volunteer position, holding office for one year. That position has no authority over FLA's work or direction. Furthermore, neither ALA nor FLA has power over the collection decisions that are made across this state in libraries of all kinds. All purchasing and collection decisions are locally governed by our libraries and in partnership with their partners and stakeholders.

FLA and all libraries in the Sunshine State share a commitment to provide library service and resources that represent the needs and values of Florida's citizens. This includes representing views that some might deem controversial or unpopular; and to make materials freely available to those who want them. We willingly share and defend the values of intellectual freedom and freedom to read. The values of intellectual freedom and the freedom to read are ones we share and are willing to defend.

Florida libraries are fundamental to the freedoms we enjoy as Americans. FLA and its more than 950 members are committed to ensuring our state's citizens can learn and think freely, are literate, lead fulfilling lives and are prepared for the workforce and for full participation in our democratic process.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Douglas Crane', with a stylized, cursive script.

Douglas Crane
Florida Library Association President, 2023-2024