

January 24, 2012

The Honorable Darrell Issa
2347 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Letter from CoUL Opposing HR 3699, Research Works Act

Dear Congressman Issa,

On behalf of the Council of University Librarians at the University of California, I am writing to oppose the proposed bill, H.R. 3699, Research Works Act.

H.R. 3699 would reverse the National Institute of Health's successful Public Access Policy and block the development of similar policies in other federal agencies; it is a step backwards in ensuring public access to the results of federally funded research.

At a time when the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) is issuing Requests for Information on how to ensure broad public access to the peer-reviewed scholarly publications and data that result from federally funded scientific research, HR 3699 is at odds with the goals of funding agencies and higher-education institutions worldwide that are seeking to maximize broad public access and expand sharing of research results. This bill would decrease the government's return on its significant investment in research and impede usage of scholarly information by millions of scientists, professionals, and individuals.

As an institution, the University of California takes very seriously its responsibility to serve the people of California, the U.S., and the world through its mission of education, research, and service. Integral to that mission is the dissemination of scholarly information and funded research as broadly as possible, which is essential to furthering scientific discoveries, creating innovative solutions to pressing problems, and improving the lives and well-being of individuals and of society. The Research Works Act is clearly counter to those goals.

We join with national library and academic organizations, including the American Library Association, the Special Libraries Association, the Medical Library Association, and the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), in urging you to withdraw your support from the bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ginny Steel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ginny Steel
Chair, Council of University Librarians
University of California