August 14, 2020

Douglas County Public Library Board of Trustees
Douglas County Public Library
1625 Library Lane
Minden, NV 89423

To the Members of the Douglas County Library Board of Trustees:

The systematic fair treatment of people of all races that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all is one of the key commitments and guiding principles of the American Library Association, the Nevada Library Association, and United for Libraries. For this reason, ALA’s Executive Board has called on library workers, administrators, trustees, and library institutions everywhere to work to end racism in their libraries and to ensure that it has no place in their policies, practices, or behaviors.

This is not a political stance, but a sincere effort to go beyond the absence of discrimination in libraries to the implementation of affirmative steps that ensure that the library is a welcoming and inclusive institution for all members of the community. Other library associations and organizations, including the Urban Libraries Council, have also called on their members to engage in this necessary and important work.

As a consequence, libraries of all types and in all parts of the country are addressing the impact of historic inequality and systemic racism on their library users, especially persons of color and those who belong to historically marginalized and minority communities. We understand that your director, Amy Dodson, proposed a draft diversity statement that would be an important first step in beginning this work in Douglas County, and that is consistent with statements issued by similar library systems and the American Library Association.

The American Library Association, the Nevada Library Association, and United for Libraries support without reservation the work that Amy Dodson and her staff are undertaking to implement the policy and system changes necessary to ensure that the Douglas County Library is a welcoming and inclusive community institution for every person in the community. We are heartened by local and state efforts to engage in dialogue around this important topic and we fully endorse continued community conversation that will ensure all library users are treated with dignity and that the library addresses the needs of a diverse community.

Sincerely and Respectfully,

Julius C. Jefferson, Jr., President
American Library Association

Forrest Lewis, President
Nevada Library Association

David Paige, President
United for Libraries