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HIGHER EDUCATION GROUPS URGE CONGRESS TO PROVIDE AMERICANS BETTER ACCESS TO PRINTED MATERIALS

Following is a joint statement in support of the Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act ([S. 2559](#)):

We commend Senate Judiciary Chair Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Ranking Member Diane Feinstein (D-CA), Foreign Relations Committee Chair Bob Corker (R-TN), Ranking Member Bob Menendez (D-NJ), and Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Kamala Harris (D-CA), and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) for their March 15 introduction of the bipartisan Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act (S. 2559) to ratify and implement the [Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled](#) (“Marrakesh Treaty”).

We urge Congress to act swiftly to pass S. 2559. It is time for blind and otherwise print-disabled individuals, at U.S. colleges and universities, to enjoy the same access to printed works as other Americans.

Our colleges and universities – among the nation’s leading producers and consumers of copyrighted works – are committed to providing equitable access to information. But students, faculty, and staff who have print disabilities encounter significant, daily challenges in accessing required course materials and essential scholarly resources. The university disability services offices that serve these communities struggle to locate or create accessible-format materials in a timely manner. The National Federation of the Blind estimates, for example, that no more than 5 percent of published works are created in an accessible format.

The Marrakesh Treaty offers a fair and transparent way to remedy the disadvantages that Americans with print disabilities confront when seeking to lawfully access the world’s printed materials.

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Founded in 1900, the [Association of American Universities](#) comprises 62 distinguished institutions that continually advance society through education, research, and discovery. Our universities earn the majority of competitively awarded federal funding for academic research, are improving human life and wellbeing through research, and are educating tomorrow’s visionary leaders and global citizens. AAU members collectively help shape policy for higher education, science, and innovation; promote best practices in undergraduate and graduate education; and strengthen the contributions of research universities to society. Follow AAU on [Twitter](#), on [Facebook](#) and on [Linkedin](#).

Celebrating its centennial in 2018, [ACE](#) is the major coordinating body for all the nation's higher education institutions, representing nearly 1,800 college and university presidents and related

associations. It provides leadership on key higher education issues and influences public policy through advocacy. For more information, please visit www.acenet.edu or follow ACE on Twitter [@ACEducation](https://twitter.com/ACEducation).

The [Association of Public and Land-grant Universities](#) is a research, policy, and advocacy organization dedicated to strengthening and advancing the work of public universities in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. With a membership of 237 public research universities, land-grant institutions, state university systems, and affiliated organizations, APLU's agenda is built on the three pillars of increasing degree completion and academic success, advancing scientific research, and expanding engagement. Annually, member campuses enroll 4.9 million undergraduates and 1.3 million graduate students, award 1.2 million degrees, employ 1.2 million faculty and staff, and conduct \$43.9 billion in university-based research.

[AUPresses](#) is an organization of more than 140 international nonprofit scholarly publishers. Since 1937, the Association of University Presses advances the essential role of a global community of publishers whose mission is to ensure academic excellence and cultivate knowledge. The Association holds integrity, diversity, stewardship, and intellectual freedom as core values. AUPresses members are active across many scholarly disciplines, including the humanities, arts, and sciences, publish significant regional and literary work, and are innovators in the world of digital publishing.

[EDUCAUSE](#) is a higher education technology association and the largest community of IT leaders and professionals committed to advancing higher education. Technology, IT roles and responsibilities, and higher education are dynamically changing. Formed in 1998, EDUCAUSE supports those who lead, manage, and use information technology to anticipate and adapt to these changes, advancing strategic IT decision making at every level within higher education. EDUCAUSE is a global nonprofit organization whose members include U.S. and international higher education institutions, corporations, not-for-profit organizations, and K-12 institutions. With a community of more than 99,000 individuals at member organizations located around the world, EDUCAUSE encourages diversity in perspective, opinion, and representation.