Libraries are essential to advancing local and national priorities: from workforce development to education, health, and entrepreneurship, libraries continually evolve to meet community needs.

Today’s libraries are making a difference in big cities and small towns across New Hampshire and America, which include public libraries as well as libraries in schools, colleges, military bases, government agencies, corporations, non-profit organizations, and beyond.

_Policymakers should include libraries_ in their policy agenda and proposals, speeches, and op-eds. Libraries can help address key local and national priorities, including:

**Jobs & Careers**
Libraries support workforce development in their communities by offering career certifications, resume and job search assistance and vocational education and training.

**Broadband**
Libraries promote digital literacy and 21st century skills building. Thirty-three million U.S. households do not access the internet at home, including one in four rural residents. America’s libraries are the leading source of free public access to the internet, computers, and technology training.

**Veterans Services**
Through libraries, veterans learn about available benefits, receive help to translate military skills to civilian employment, and reinforce family and community connections. Libraries partner with veterans service organizations, the federal government, and others to connect veterans with vital services.

**Early Learning & Literacy**
Librarians nurture literacy development, beginning at birth. Studies show children from low-income families may hear roughly 30 million fewer words by age 4 than their more affluent peers. Libraries staffed with trained librarians help close this gap through national efforts like Every Child Ready to Read and Babies Need Words Every Day, as well as through locally developed programs.
Small Business & Entrepreneurship
Libraries propel entrepreneurship across the United States. Entrepreneurs seek out library services to develop their business plans, access data to research emerging markets, utilize low to no-cost co-working space, obtain patent data, or use 3-D printers and other cutting-edge technologies for prototyping.

Health & Social Services
Libraries are trusted community conduits for social service resources. Libraries provide safe, trusted resources for people experiencing domestic violence, homelessness, substance abuse or mental illness, and regularly partner with local service providers to facilitate tailored services.

Government Information & Services
Libraries connect Americans with government information and services, such as filing taxes and applying for health insurance. In the 2020 Census, libraries are partnering with their communities to promote a complete count by working to bridge the digital divide, deliver trusted information, and reach hard-to-count populations.

Immigrant Integration & New Americans
Libraries assist immigrants in achieving their American dream by providing citizenship classes, English language courses, access to legal resources, and books and materials in the languages prevalent in the community.

Civic Engagement
Libraries promote inclusive and informed engagement in our democracy by providing access to voter registration applications, election and candidate information, and a wide range of publications about current issues. Libraries also host candidate and issue forums and serve as polling places or ballot drop-off locations.

Environmental Stewardship
Libraries around the country are working to steward the local and global environment. Libraries are retrofitting or building new facilities to more efficiently manage energy, water, and stormwater, in order to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and environmental impact. Libraries also provide environmental education and information to help community members make greener choices.

The New Hampshire Library Association (NHLA) is the oldest state library association in the United States, founded in 1889. NHLA is committed to networking, professional growth, and advocating for the future of New Hampshire libraries. Visit nhlibrarians.org

For more than 140 years, the American Library Association has been the trusted voice for public, academic, school, government and special libraries, advocating for the profession and the library’s role in enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all. Visit ala.org.