TO: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

FROM: Barbara B. Tillett, LC Representative

SUBJECT: Revision of RDA 9.13, Affiliation

While LC appreciates the thought that ALA has invested in expanding the scope of the Affiliation element in RDA, the many concerns raised in the "Issues for Discussion" section have given us pause. We do not recommend approving the proposed changes as presented. Rather than adding the proposed sub-elements to RDA, without the benefit of an obvious vocabulary useful in the linked data environment, LC suggests the following:

1) The JSC should consult with the FRBR Review Group to gauge the interest in extending the FRAD model in the manner suggested by ALA. The background information provided by ALA would be useful for this purpose.

2) While the compatibility issues with FRAD are under consideration, LC recommends the use of two techniques within the existing RDA construct that will accommodate the additional information:

> a) Use a term from Appendix K (Relationship Designators: Relationships between Persons, Families, and Corporate Bodies) to express the relationship between the person and the affiliated body (e.g., employee, group member, incumbent). LC would welcome additional suggestions for relationship designators proposed for addition to Appendix K.
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> b) Use the RDA Element "Biographical Information" (9.17) to document the information. One of the instructions in 9.17 says "As appropriate, incorporate information pertaining to specific identifying elements (see 9.3-9.16) into a biographical information element." LC notes that Affiliation is within that range (9.13). While this technique may limit the machine parsing that may be intended by the ALA proposal, it does allow for the formatting of the information for public display to meet the user tasks.

LC further notes that the proposed "dates of affiliation" sub-element is a concept that could also be applied more broadly to other attributes (e.g., dates of profession/ occupation, dates of the address of the person), and wonders if a more generic approach may be appropriate, related to earlier JSC discussions of data about data.