

**End game strategy**

As the House and Senate proceed toward the end of the 107th Congress, there are key library-related bills and proposals left up-in-the-air. At this writing, no final action has been completed in the House on the Museum and Library Services Act, H.R. 3784, which includes the reauthorization of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). LSTA serves all types of libraries, including academic and school libraries, that receive money and benefit from leadership and state-based direct grants and networks.

It is now rumored that key House majority leaders will not bring the bill to a floor vote unless funding-level language is weakened to "such sums as may be. . . ." This is disturbing, indeed, since there were unanimous bipartisan votes in both the pertinent House subcommittee and full committee with language authorizing up to \$300 million, about an 80 percent increase over the next five years from current funding levels. Meanwhile the Senate, recognizing the need for improved funding levels for library programs, is standing fast for authorizing LSTA up to \$350 million in its bill, S. 2611. For an update on the status of H.R. 3784, check our Web site at: <http://www.ala.org/washoff/funding/html>.

It is also unclear whether there will be the time and the will for the House and Senate to complete all of their work on e-government legislation. The Senate has S. 803, which is very similar to the House bill, H.R. 2458, which has now passed committee. Watch ALAWON for a report or check our Web site at: <http://www.ala.org/washoff/governmentinfo.html>.

But good news prevails with passage of the TEACH Act, which is waiting for the President's signature. Once it is signed, ALA will be conducting a major outreach initiative to inform the academic library community and others about the TEACH Act, which updates copyright provisions to provide for distance learning. Again, all types of libraries will ben-

efit from this legislation. See our Web site at: <http://www.ala.org/washoff/disted.html>.

A standoff continues on FY2003 appropriations. Continuing resolutions (CRs) are being passed to fund the federal government through early November. But it is reported that little actual negotiating on FY2003 appropriations has occurred, and we can expect these CRs to be renewed. There will be a lame duck session after the November elections, which is perhaps why appropriations discussions have stalled.

With close battles for control of both the House and the Senate, many are waiting to see what the new Congress will look like. The November 5 election could immediately determine, at least temporarily, the makeup of the Senate. Because it is a special election for the Senate slot presently held by Senator Jean Carnahan (D-Missouri), if she is not reelected, the Senate will return immediately back to Republican control. If overall Republicans prevail, then the Senate would stay Republican. If the Democrats win more Senate seats, then the Senate would return to Democrat control in January, even if Carnahan loses.

As the "end game" strategy continues on all sides, watch for "Christmas tree" bills, where some bills are added onto other completely unrelated legislation in order to get passed. (Rather like adding cars to a moving train.) While we have prevailed in fighting passage of database legislation (see <http://www.ala.org/washoff/database.html>) thus far, this is a critical time for the library community to be cautious and scrutinize all kinds of legislation. This is also being done on the homeland security proposals.

Even as Washington is agonizingly moving toward the end of the 107th Congress, people are already anticipating issues for the 108th. Key higher education groups have begun to meet because of the need to reauthorize the Higher Education Act (HEA) in the coming year. ALA will be participating in some of those key discussions and reporting back to ACRL and others. Watch for more information as we prepare for the next Congress. Grassroots efforts from the academic library community will be needed during the 108th on HEA and other issues. ■

Lynne E. Bradley is Office of Government Relations director of ALA's Washington Office; e-mail: [leb@alawash.org](mailto:leb@alawash.org)