

WASHINGTON HOTLINE



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House passage of the FY 1989 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill (HR 4587) was a testament to the power of library grassroots contacts with legislators. On May 19 the House rejected an attempt by Rep. Hank Brown (R-CO), with support by Rep. Frederick Upton (R-MI), to cut the Library of Congress budget. Legislative Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Vic Fazio (D-CA), in arguing strenuously against the amendment, said: "We really do need to provide some relief, and the librarians across the country have asked us for this, and I know each of my colleagues have heard from them, and they will hear more if they are so inclined to vote for a reduction today."

The appeal by Reps. Fazio, Lindy Boggs (D-LA), and Mary Rose Oakar (D-OH) resulted in no roll call vote on the amendment, and its defeat on a voice vote. An amendment offered by Rep. Bill Frenzel (R-MN) to cut the bill across the board by 1.6 percent was defeated 184-211. The House went on to pass HR 4587 by 277-104, with no cuts to LC or GPO.

At hearings in March, ALA President Margaret Chisholm pointed out that in the last five years, LC funding increased only 6.5 percent, and promised a grassroots campaign of letters. Those of you who responded obviously had an effect. Reps. Fazio, Boggs, and Oakar deserve thanks.

HR 4587 included a total of \$256,883,000 (including \$13,034,000 from receipts) for LC, a 3.6 percent increase over FY 1988. While less than the Library's request of \$274,198,000, it compares favorably with the Committee's recommended 1.6 percent overall growth for the Legislative Branch.

The Library had wanted to double its preservation microfilming; the House approved about half the increase, and in House Report 100-621 directed LC "to enlist the aid of the Nation's research libraries and other libraries to determine the extent of the brittle book inventory, including its potential growth over the next 20 years, and to determine the goals for microfilming or otherwise preserving that inventory." HR 4587 as passed by the Senate on June 14 provides an additional \$130,000 in preservation staffing, and \$265,000 additional for microfilming. Both House and Senate approved LC's request to contract with the private sector for a mass deacidification facility, but not for a "sole source" technology solution.

On electronic government information, the House report said: "The Committee agrees with providing cost-effective methods of electronic dissemination of information to depository libraries such as CD-ROMS. Other methods, however, such as on-line access, which may increase funding requirements, must be submitted to the Committee before being implemented. In addition, a copy of the plan for the electronic dissemination of information to depository libraries which is being developed jointly by the GPO and the Joint Committee on Printing should be forwarded to the Committee when it is finalized."

For the Government Printing Office Superintendent of Documents operation, both bills provide \$25,155,000, which includes \$11,424,000 from the revolving fund from the sale of publications. SuDocs received \$24,662,000 in FY '88, and requested \$26,800,000 for FY '89.