

News from Washington

Budget impasse stalls legislation

The federal budget impasse between the Congressional majority and the Clinton administration has meant a halt to work on most other pieces of library-related legislation. The Senate-House conference committee negotiations on the renewal of the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) as a reinvented Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) has been postponed during the budget standoff.

Just before a type of end-of-year "recess," some congressional staffers reported that there was general agreement among conferees on S. 652, the Telecommunications Act of 1995. Other reports stated that some Republicans remained skeptical and could not yet agree to a potential final version of the bill. Amidst the highly charged political atmosphere, this is becoming increasingly difficult, even though this legislation had been developed in a relatively bipartisan manner.

ALA has been advised that the Snowe-Rockefeller-Kerrey-Exon provision, which mandates a type of affordable telecommunications rates for K-12 schools and libraries, was kept substantially intact in the final version. Unfor-

tunately, library advocates remain gravely concerned that the "family online empowerment" (or the "cyber-censorship" provision) was kept. This provision would still make mere "display" or "indecent" material over online services a criminal offense—a feature that could seriously threaten libraries as providers and publishers of online information.

ALA in D.C. offers toll-free number

ALA members outside the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area can now use a toll-free 800 number to contact the ALA Washington Office and the Office of Information Technology Policy (OITP). The number is (800) 941-8478.

The new service is part of ALA's expansion of its Washington presence to better implement ALA Goal 2000, which promotes the public's participation in a free and open information society.

The 800 number complements new voice mail and after-hours phone service installed with the recent move of the Washington Office and OITP to expanded facilities.—Lynn Bradley, deputy director, ALA/Washington ■



Jo Burgess, head of Collection Conservation at Indiana University, demonstrates book repairing during Preservation Awareness Week. The poster (left) publicizes the event.

Finally!

**Upgraded CIP Records
At the time of publication!**

Available for Approval
and New Titles Books
from

**BLACKWELL
NORTH AMERICA**

Where Innovation is a Tradition

1-800-547-6426
TECHSERV@BNAMEBLACKWELL.COM