

Washington Hotline



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NREN. One of ALA's high legislative priorities achieved a major step toward realization on September 11 when the Senate passed by voice vote S. 272, the High-Performance Computing Act, which would establish a National Research and Education Network. The amended text represents a compromise between the bills introduced by Sen. Albert Gore (D-TN) and approved by the commerce and science committee; and by Sen. J. Bennett Johnston (D-LA) and approved by the energy committee.

In the Senate-passed bill, federal agencies are to work with state and local agencies, libraries, educational institutions and organizations, private network service providers, and others to ensure that researchers, educators, and students have access to the NREN. In addition, the NREN is to provide users with appropriate access to supercomputers, electronic information resources, other research facilities, and libraries.

Differences with the House-passed HR 656 must now be resolved. The administration objects to protectionist trade amendments added to the House bill at the last moment, and to some details of both measures. Since high-performance computing is an administration priority, and the legislation enjoys strong bipartisan support, it is hoped differences can be worked out satisfactorily and that the president will sign the final version.

Sen. Paul Simon (D-IL), in the September 13 *Congressional Record* (pp. S12996-97), commended the inclusion of libraries in the NREN bill. As the bill moved into conference, he hoped "that the conferees continue to include libraries as vital components of the network."

HEA. A bill (HR 3181) incorporating the recommendations of ALA and the Association of Research Libraries concerning reauthorization of Higher Education Act title II library programs was introduced on August 1 by Rep. Dale Kildee (D-MI) with cosponsors Major Owens (D-NY) and Jack Reed (D-RI). Rep. Kildee was interested in a leadership role on HEA library programs as a result of his discussions with Michigan witnesses at the April 16 Legislative Day hearing on HEA II. The five witnesses included two from Michigan: Hiram Davis, director of libraries at Michigan State University and chair of the ACRL Government Relations Committee, and then ALA President Richard Dougherty, University of Michigan School of Information and Library Studies. A constituent of Rep. Reed, Brown University librarian Merrily Taylor testified on behalf of ALA and ARL at Senate hearings in May. HR 3181 demonstrates that appearing as a witness or visiting on Legislative Day can have direct results. HR 3181 was one of a number of HEA bills introduced by members of the Education and Labor Committee, and later incorporated into a draft omnibus Higher Education Act reauthorization bill by chairman Bill Ford (D-MI). At this writing the draft bill is still being marked up by the Postsecondary Education Subcommittee, also chaired by Rep. Ford. On October 1 the subcommittee approved title II, to be called Academic Library and Information Technology Enhancement, which includes the following provisions:

II-A, College Library Technology and Cooperation Grants (replacing the current and unfunded grants for college library resources with a revised II-D technology grant program). New emphases include encouraging developing institutions seeking to link one or more institutions to resource-sharing networks, and encouraging linkages to the Internet/NREN. The authorization level (or ceiling for funding) would be \$25 million for FY 1993 and such sums as necessary for each of the four succeeding fiscal years.

II-B, Library Education, Research, and Development. The subcommittee would continue the current program of graduate fellowships and other educational assistance with emphasis on areas of critical needs such as recruitment of minorities. The research and demonstration program would also be continued. The bill would require consultation with library and information science professional bodies in the determination of research priorities and critical needs in library education. Authorization level: \$15 million in FY '93 plus such sums for the next four years.

II-C, Improving Access to Research Library Resources. The current program of grants to major research libraries would be continued. The intended emphasis would be on projects related to the Internet/NREN and encouragement of interinstitutional cooperation in collection development. Authorization level: \$25 million for FY '93 plus such sums for the next four years.

II-D, Strengthening Library and Information Science Programs in Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The subcommittee would authorize a new program of grants to historically black colleges and universities with nationally approved programs in library and information science in order to assist such entities in educating and training African Americans and other ethnic minorities in areas of critical needs. Authorization level: \$25 million for FY '93 plus such sums for the next four years.

The proposed new HEA II-D was not part of HR 3181 but was included at the request of Rep. Donald Payne (D-NJ). The proposal originated in a recommendation of the historically black colleges and universities (through the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education) and was endorsed by the White House Conference on Library and Information Services. Two institutions among the HBCUs have accredited graduate library education programs. The WHCLIS recommendation on recruitment refers specifically to these two institutions:

Funding agencies in the public and private sectors should increase their support of fellowships and scholarships for minority library students; and library and information professionals should assume responsibility along with library schools for the recruitment of culturally diverse populations into the library and information professions. Therefore, we recommend that libraries and library services of historically black colleges and universities be adequately funded and strengthened to prepare for the Work Force 2000 and that special funds be designated for the library and information programs at Atlanta University and North Carolina Central University, which are accredited by the American Library Association.

The Senate education subcommittee is expected to announce shortly its bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act. Both the House and Senate hope to pass their bills this fall, and to complete the process next year.

BIS releases new publication

The ACRL Bibliographic Instruction Section has published a book called *Read This First: An Owner's Guide to the New Model Statement of Objectives for Academic Bibliographic Instruction*. This publication is designed to make the *Model Statement* accessible to instruction librarians. Three papers and four poster session abstracts from the 1990 BIS Conference Program provide practical

and pragmatic applications of the *Model*. The 72-page paperback is priced at \$14.95 for ACRL members and \$17.95 for non-members. ALA members get a ten percent discount. *Read This First* (ISBN 0-8389-7548-8) may be ordered from the ALA Order Department, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611; phone: (800) 545-2433, ext. 5014; fax: (312) 440-9374.