E-government legislation introduced

May 1 was the 27th National Library Legislative Day. It also happened to coincide with the introduction of a new E-government bill, S. 803—The E-Government Act of 2001—cosponsored by Senators Joseph Lieberman (D-Connecticut) and Conrad Burns (R-Montana).

What does the bill address?

Key provisions in the bill include: creation of a federal government-wide chief information officer to be located in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), formalization by statute of the federal Chief Information Officers Council (CIO Council), and establishment of an interagency information tech fund.

The bill also addresses the ongoing support and development of a centralized portal and directory of federal government Web sites, further investigation into an online national library, and creation of a federal information technology training center. Court Web sites, privacy, and security are also addressed.

How might the bill affect the library community?

Of particular interest to the library community is the provision related to preserving government information and making it accessible and usable for the public. S. 803 makes a number of proposals that address lifecycle management issues of federal government electronic information, including long-term permanent public access.

Bill a "work in progress"

Both senators emphasized that this bill is a "work in progress" and that further discussions are underway to improve and change the bill. ALA and other library organizations have indicated their willingness to participate in ongoing discussions about S. 803. The library community will participate in the debate on numerous aspects of the legislation, especially permanent public access.

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ALA President Nancy Kranich spoke at the press conference. Referencing the library advocates lobbying on Capitol Hill that day, Kranich said: "The issues related to access to government information are critical to [the library community]. We are particularly pleased that Senator Lieberman is incorporating into his e-government initiative life cycle information management issues, including the collection, organization and preservation of online government information. Librarians stand ready to work with [all stakeholders] to ensure that every American can participate in e-government and that no one is left behind in the digital age."

For the full text of the current draft of S. 803, visit: http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=107_cong_bills&docid=f:s803is.txt.pdf.

Sen. Lieberman's statement at the May 1st press conference is available at http://www.senate.gov/~lieberman/press/01/05/2001501810.html.

The text of ALA President Nancy Kranich's statement is at http://www.ala.org/washoff/kranichegovt.pdf.

27th National Library Legislative Day (NLLD)

Thanks to the many academic librarians who participated in the 27th NLLD. We saw yet again a new high in the number of participants. More than 650 academic, public and school librarians, trustees, and friends of libraries attended this annual event sponsored by the ALA Committee on Legislation and the District of Columbia Library Association.

The continued annual increases in NLLD participation is in part, due to the increased participation of academic librarians. ACRL once again had a highly successful luncheon on April 30. More than 60 ACRL members attended the special luncheon where they heard more about the latest in the state legislative battles over UCITA, the Uniform Computer Information Transaction Act.

For more information about NLLD, see http://www.ala.org/washoff/legday.html. ■

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