

End of session developments

We briefly summarize here the final status of several key legislative issues that were resolved either as separate bills or as part of the omnibus appropriations bill, H.R. 4328, (based on the FY99 transportation appropriations conference report (H. Rept. 105-825). The omnibus measure was passed by the 105th Congress and signed by the President in late October. This information is also available online at <http://www.ala.org/washoff/105sum.html>.

WIPO Copyright Treaties Implementation Act passed

Congress gave final approval to the H.R. 2281, Digital Millennium Copyright Act. This final version includes improvements to several sections of the bill of that are interest to librarians and users of information. On October 28, the President signed the measure (now P.L. 105-304), which updates the Copyright Act for the digital environment and conforms U.S. law to the requirements of the new World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) treaties negotiated in Geneva in December 1996.

Database protection bill dropped

Conferees agreed to drop the Collections of Information Anti-Piracy Act from H.R. 2281, the WIPO treaties bill. This is a major improvement; the database protection measure would have had drastic negative effects on education and research and would have protected facts for the first time. Key legislators have promised that the issue will be an early agenda item in the new Congress next year.

Copyright term extension act passed

Both Senate and House passed on October 7 a 20-year extension of the current life-plus-50-year copyright term (S. 505), and the President signed the bill (now P.L. 105-298) on October 27. The measure retains a limited exception for libraries, archives, and nonprofit educational institutions crafted in intense negotiations last year.

Blocking software requirements dropped

The omnibus package contained *no* requirements to have libraries or schools install and

use filtering and blocking software as a condition of receiving federal funds or the e-rate. However, the Istook amendment was again under serious consideration for attachment to the omnibus bill. After much work by library advocates and others, the amendment was dropped.

Selected library and education program funding (in millions) passed

PROGRAM	FY98	FY99 PRES. BUDGET	FINAL FY99
LSTA	\$146.3	\$146.3	\$166.2
Reading••	0	50.0	260.0
ESEA VI	350.0	0	375.0
Ed. Tech.***	584.0	721.0	698.1
21C L.Ctrs.	40.0	200.0	200.0
Work Study	830.0	900.0	870.0
Teachers••••	0	1,100.0	1,194.0
NCLIS	1.0	1.0	1.0

• LSTA total includes level funding for state grants; Congress put the increase in the National Leadership Grants, which receive a total of \$25m from LSTA, of which \$15.4m is for specific earmarked projects

- Reading Excellence Act (America Reads children's literacy initiative)
- Total of various programs
- Class size, reduction teacher recruitment and training.

Government Publications Reform Act dropped

S.2288, the Wendell H. Ford Government Publications Reform Act of 1998, died with congressional adjournment. This bill, which had been approved earlier by the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, would have reformed Title 44 U.S.C., strengthened the Federal Depository Library Program, and improved public access. ■

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