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STATEMENT BY GERMAINE KRETTEK  
DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON OFFICE, AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
ON H.R. 5266  
BEFORE THE SELECT SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR  
MARCH 17, 1961

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Library

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
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Madam Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Germaine Krettek. I am Director of the Washington Office of the American Library Association, a nonprofit, professional association of more than 25,000 members, consisting of librarians, trustees, and laymen interested in the development, extension, and improvement of libraries as essential factors in the educational program of the Nation.

The American Library Association is in favor of legislation such as H.R. 5266 "to authorize assistance to public and other nonprofit institutions of higher education in financing the construction, rehabilitation, or improvement of needed academic and related facilities, and to authorize scholarships for undergraduate study in such institutions."

This position on Federal assistance to higher education is in accord with the Legislative Policy of the American Library Association adopted by the Council, its governing body, on January 29, 1959. This statement declared that college and university libraries "are a vital part of higher education [and that] Federal scholarships and loans and [Federal] aid to college building programs....benefit the whole country by raising the general level of support for college education."

The Association is especially pleased that the proposed legislation, Sec. 106 (a) (1), in the definition of "academic facilities", specifically mentions libraries

Library construction is indeed in great need of assistance. Of over 2,000 institutions of higher education in the United States today, it appears according to best estimates that no more than one hundred, or 5%, have really adequate library facilities. Preliminary cost estimates made by the U. S. Office of Education in the College and University Facilities Survey indicate that during 1956-1970 slightly more than 300 million dollars are planned to be spent on the construction of college

and university library buildings, including additions and alterations, and that this amount represents only a fraction of the actual need. Studies also indicate that far too many library facilities are so inadequate or unsuitable for service that they actually hamper, in many cases, the use of a good book collection and efforts of a well-trained staff.

College and university library building programs are facing serious difficulties and the situation will grow worse in the next decade, unless counteracting measures are taken immediately.

There are a number of reasons for this plight:

1. The sheer increase in the number of the students and in the size of the higher education staff is one cause. Conservative estimates place the increase in students from 3.4 million in 1959 to 6 million in 1970; and the increase in staff from 232,000 in 1959 to 322,000 in 1970. These increases place added burdens on the buildings and equipment of the libraries.
2. The teaching program of today depends more and more on books, periodicals, scientific journals, and documents. From the first courses in history and economics to the most advanced seminars in nuclear physics, every course is dependent on libraries. This situation means that among other things greater facilities for the shelving and utilization of books are required.
3. Increased seating capacity is needed not only because of the mere increase in students, but by virtue of the fact that students must have facilities for more independent and related reading within the library.
4. Extensive research programs, many of which are financed by government contracts and are involved in the national defense, rely heavily on libraries. In this connection, the National Science Foundation reported the expenditures for organized research in our

universities increased from 450 million in 1953-54 to 1 billion dollars in 1959-60.

Certainly the need for additional library building facilities is an urgent one in every section of the Nation; indeed, it is most unusual for a college or university these days to have a library adequate for its needs, and this applies even to institutions which have erected new library buildings in the past few years.

A typical case of the strain on the capacity of a university library building was reported by Edmon Low, Director of the Library of the University of Oklahoma, and current President of the Association of College and Research Libraries, a Division of the American Library Association:

"Our University completed a library building in 1953 -- just eight years ago -- at a cost of four million dollars (it would cost over five million today). When planned, we anticipated peak library attendance of some 3,000 students a day and, on that basis and the expected growth of bookstock, estimated it would be adequate for at least 15 and probably 20 years. Now, instead of a peak attendance of 3,000 a day, we have over 7,000 a day. Seats are available for only a part of these students; they sit on the floor, go to classrooms close by (if any can be found vacant) or to the lawn in the milder weather, or just give up and go away with their needs unmet."

Although the American Library Association approves of the intent of H.R.5266 in general, it does feel compelled to point out that loans for college and university libraries will not meet the needs of all institutions. In some States, public colleges and universities will probably find it impossible, by reason of State laws, to utilize Federal loans in the case of non-revenue producing buildings, such as a library. The fiscal policy of some private institutions likewise prevents their borrowing money for non-revenue producing buildings. We hope, therefore, that the proposed legislation may go further and also provide for matching grants for accredited institutions.

In regard to Title II, Scholarships for College Students, the American Library Association is wholly in accord with the intent of the legislation. We do not feel it is within our province, however, to make suggestions regarding the methods of selecting students for scholarships or regarding the amount to be paid the institution which the scholarship holder attends.

Any effort to assist needy and qualified students in obtaining four years of undergraduate work is desirable and essential. The Joint Committee on Library Work as a Career reports: "Our crisis is the acute shortage of library school graduates. Thousands of library positions are now vacant...Library school enrollment is down and shows no signs of increasing." Since professional library training normally requires a bachelor's degree, any measure will be helpful which will add to the pool of college graduates who may go on to professional library schools.

Much depends on higher education today -- the men and women it trains, the role they play in our society, the research they do, the discoveries they make -- and higher education depends so much on its libraries.

In general the American Library Association supports H.R.5266, but we do feel obliged to emphasize that many colleges and universities will be unable to take advantage of loans for the construction of libraries which are non-revenue producing.

In conclusion, may I express our appreciation for this opportunity to present the views of the American Library Association.