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FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

On February 20 President Kennedy sent to Congress a message recommending enactment of legislation which would provide Federal financial assistance to public elementary and secondary schools; construction of college and university facilities; assistance to college and university students; and vocational education. Bills to implement the Administration proposals have been introduced as well as numerous other bills designed to meet the problems of education in various ways. Hearings are now under way.

SCHOOL ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961

As expected, principal attention is centered on the Administration proposals. The recommendations concerning elementary and secondary schools are embodied in S.1021 introduced by Senator Wayne Morse (D., Ore.) with 21 Co-sponsors and in H.R.4970 introduced by Representative Frank Thompson (D., N.J.). Essentially, the bills would provide \$2.3 billion for a three-year program and would authorize basic grants to each State of \$15.00 for every student in average daily attendance in the public schools to be distributed for school construction and/or teachers' salaries at the discretion of the State. "Ten percent of the funds allocated to each state... is to be used to help meet the unique problems of each State's areas of special educational need..." An equalization formula is provided.

Included in the bill are a number of sections which have direct implications for school libraries and school librarians. For example, Sec. 109 provides that part of the funds allotted to each State education agency shall be used for "paying part of the costs of pilot, demonstration, or experimental projects of local educational agencies designed to meet public school problems or to develop or evaluate school programs of a special or unique nature." School libraries would be especially concerned with Sec. 109 (1) remedial or special instructional programs or services for pupils having special language or adjustment problems; Sec. 109 (2) programs or services for adapting curriculums to the needs of deprived or disadvantaged pupils; Sec. 109 (5) programs for developing new types of elementary or secondary instruction or programming; Sec. 109 (8) programs to encourage and stimulate educational excellence, including programs for exceptionally gifted children.

Under Definitions, Sec. 113 (8) provides not only for classrooms but also for related facilities. Under the latter, we assume that the intent of the bill is to include quarters for school libraries, their construction, alteration, etc.

This same section also provides for "instructional materials other than textbooks." We assume that this phrase means books, periodicals and equipment for school libraries and audio-visual materials and equipment.

In Sec. 113 (10), the term "teacher" is defined as meaning any member of the instructional staff of a public school as defined by the State education department. It is assumed that school librarians would be included under the definition of instructional staff.

Testimony in support of the bill, with particular emphasis on the needs and importance of school libraries, was presented for ALA before the Subcommittee on Education of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee on March 15 and before the General Subcommittee on Education of the House Education and Labor Committee on March 17.

Letters are needed at this time to members of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee and the House Committee on Education and Labor, urging favorable action on this proposed legislation which will "assist the States and their local subdivisions in establishing and maintaining adequate educational services and facilities and in equalizing educational opportunity..." (ALA Legislative Policy II E). Tell your Congressmen how pleased you are that the bill recognizes the need for school library quarters and materials in the construction, remodeling or improvement of school facilities and point out the ways in which an adequate school library can benefit the entire school program.

COLLEGE ACADEMIC FACILITIES AND SCHOLARSHIP ACT

Bills were introduced on March 7 in both House and Senate "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." The Senate bill, S.1241 is sponsored by Senator Lister Hill with thirteen other Senators as Co-sponsors. Representative Edith Green (D., Ore.) introduced the identical House bill, H.R.5266. Hearings have already been held by the Select Subcommittee of the House Committee on Education and Labor but no action has yet been scheduled by the Senate Education Subcommittee.

On March 17 ALA testified at the House hearing in favor of legislation such as H.R.5266 which specifically mentions libraries as one of the academic facilities eligible for Federal loans. In relation to such loans, however, it was stated that: "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."

Since the House Subcommittee is expected to report a bill to the full Education and Labor Committee in the near future letters can be very useful at this time to members of the House Committee on Education and Labor. (See list in Newsletter of February 17, 1961).

LIBRARY SERVICES ACT APPROPRIATIONS

The House has approved H.R.5183, the bill making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1961. Included is an item which reads: "For an additional amount, fiscal year 1960, for 'Grants for library services', \$1,300,000." This amount will be sufficient to pay all of the States their full authorized allocation for the period July 1, 1959 - June 30, 1960. Senate hearings are now under way.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee has begun hearings on the Health, Education and Welfare money bill for Fiscal 1962 (July 1, 1961 - June 30, 1962). ALA is scheduled to testify during the week of April 10 - 14 in support of the maximum amount authorized, \$7,500,000.

EASTER RECESS FOR CONGRESS

Your Congressmen will be at home for the Easter recess from Thursday, March 30 through Tuesday, April 4. This would be a good opportunity to see them in person and talk over legislation of interest to libraries.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

Julia Butler Hansen (D., Wash.) is a new member of the Committee.

CONGRESSMEN LIKE TO BE THANKED

When I testified on the Federal Aid to Education bill last week, Representative Cleveland Bailey of West Virginia, Chairman of the General Education Subcommittee, made the following remarks which express clearly how much the Members of Congress appreciate words of commendation:

Mr. Bailey: "Is the Library Association you represent pleased with the action taken by Congress last year in extending the rural library service?"

Miss Krettek: "Indeed we are, Mr. Chairman. We appreciate your good efforts in support of that legislation."

Mr. Bailey: "The first thing you did was to thank Congressmen for that. You know, we like to know that we are being appreciated."