



WASHINGTON NEWSLETTER



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Attachments: House and Senate Budget Committee lists
House Appropriations Committee list
Senate Human Resources Committee list

Congressional Budget

The Congressional budget process--in place now for four years--has gradually become effective in giving Congress better control of federal spending. This year, with continued inflation, Proposition 13, and growing pressure for a balanced federal budget, the Congressional budget process is shaping up as especially crucial, and budget committee slots are the favored committee assignments. This more fiscally conservative Congress could set budget targets and ceilings so low they may severely limit the funding levels the appropriations committees can recommend for specific programs.

Until 1974 budget and spending priorities were determined by the Executive Branch or by piecemeal Congressional actions. The Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 set a timetable and procedures for the budget process, established House and Senate Budget Committees and a Congressional Budget Office as an alternate source of economic forecasts and analysis. The timetable which applies to the FY 1980 budget process is as follows:

Congressional Budget Timetable - FY 1980

January 22, 1979	-President Carter submitted FY 1980 budget to Congress
March 15, 1979	-Authorizing committees submit reports to budget committees about funding needs of programs within their jurisdiction
April 15, 1979	-Congressional budget committees report tentative congressional budget recommendations for FY 1980
May 15, 1979	-Authorizing committees report bills authorizing new budget authority for FY 1980
	-Congress approves first concurrent budget resolution setting FY 1980 spending and revenue targets
June 1979	-Congress approves new authorizations for FY 1980
	-Regular annual appropriations bills should be reported from House Appropriations Committee
August 15, 1979	-Congressional budget committees report tentative budget ceilings for FY 1980
September 1979	-All appropriations bills should be approved by Congress
September 15, 1979	-Congress approves second concurrent budget resolution setting revenue floors and spending ceilings for FY 1980
October 1, 1979	-Fiscal year 1980 begins

Specific programs are not mentioned in the budget resolutions, but the budget committees determine functional levels for broad categories of government activity based on certain assumptions about the economy and likely Congressional action. Most federal library programs form a tiny part of Function 500, Education, Training, Employment and Social Services. The first budget resolution sets spending and revenue targets; the second sets an absolute spending ceiling and revenue floor. Proposals which would exceed the limits in the second budget resolution are subject to points of order.

It is apparent that library supporters concerned about the funding levels of federal library programs must pay attention to the budget committees as well as the appropriations committees. If the function 500 level is set too low, appropriations committees may have very little leeway to maneuver, and raising the funding level on one program could only be done at the expense of another.

ACTION NEEDED: Lists of House and Senate Budget Committees are attached to this newsletter. If your senator or representative is a member, get in touch immediately. Explain that budget levels must allow for adequate funding for library and education programs. Show how these programs have benefited the member's district or state. Write also to your own members and urge them to contact their colleagues on the budget committees.

Depository Libraries

A resolution passed at the January 12 meeting of the Public Printer's Micropublishing Council recommends a major limitation of the Government Printing Office micropublishing program:

The Public Printer's Council on Micropublishing recommends that the Public Printer limit the implementation of the GPO Micropublishing Program to those items which are not currently offered in satisfactory form in the marketplace pending clarification of the role that the Title 44 revision effort will play in addressing basic issues.

The resolution was introduced by Joseph Fitzsimmons, representing the Information Industry Association, whose members felt inadequate attention has been given to the issue of the impact of the GPO program on the existing structure of information retrieval services offered to users in the marketplace.

The Depository Library Council to the Public Printer and ALA's Government Documents Round Table support the GPO depository micropublishing program as planned. Many of their members have written to the Public Printer and to the Joint Committee on Printing opposing the resolution. Observations made by some of the letters include: If this recommendation is accepted there would be very few titles entering the depository microfiche program. Libraries would be forced to continue receiving hard copy material in cases where they have indicated a preference for microfiche. The Public Printer would not be able to achieve the projected savings in the budget for depository distribution since he would be forced to continue the costlier hard copy distribution medium. Libraries with severe space limitations which are using the option to select certain titles in microfiche as a means of providing public access to more documentation would have to continue a more limited selection profile.

The response of the Public Printer, John J. Boyle, to librarians who have written concerning the microfiche program for depository libraries indicates that while he welcomes recommendations from advisory bodies, he does intend to proceed with the program, in accordance with the appropriate statutory provisions.

Appropriations, FY 1980 - Library of Congress

Hearings on the Library of Congress budget were held by the Legislative Appropriations Subcommittees on February 14 and 15 in the House and February 21 in the Senate. LC officials stated that their request included only top priority needs, noting for example that it "excluded \$16,131,748 and 166 positions for program activities which we considered to be of value to the Congress, the library and scholarly communities, and the nation."

Despite the attempt by LC to carefully detail the justification for their FY 1979 supplemental and FY 1980 requests, they encountered intense scrutiny on the part of Rep. Adam Benjamin (D-IN), chair of the House Legislative Appropriations Subcommittee. Benjamin spent the better part of two days examining the LC proposal for accuracy, necessity and legality. This fine-tooth comb approach seems to stem, not from actual opposition to LC activities, but from a strong belief on Benjamin's part that it is his duty to make sure the programs under his jurisdiction do not spend federal funds unnecessarily, and no detail is too small to escape his attention.

Among the prominent targets of his review were exhibits, audiovisual equipment, travel, automation hardware and labor associated with software production, as well as Madison building expenses relating to moving, furniture, maintenance and security. Of particular concern was Benjamin's request that LC develop proposals to recoup some of the money spent for services benefiting the nation's libraries. Despite the efforts of Librarian of Congress Daniel Boorstin and Deputy Librarian William Welsh to explain that the benefits flowed in both directions through the cooperative nature of many LC projects and services, Benjamin pressed for suggestions as to the best manner to obtain a small return for the library's nationwide services. Citing a figure of \$248 million saved by libraries as a result of LC programs, Benjamin did acknowledge that much of what is contributed by the country's libraries to the Library of Congress does not show in receipts.

Higher Education Act Extension

The Department of HEW held a series of regional hearings on Higher Education Act reauthorization issues in late January and early February. The ALA Washington Office has received copies of statements from several librarians who testified at these hearings on HEA title II college and research library, and library training and demonstration programs. However, if there are other librarians who testified or whose recommendations were included in institutional testimony, please send copies of your statements to the ALA Washington Office. Such statements will be helpful in preparation for congressional hearings on HEA extension later this year.

Department of Education

The Carter administration unveiled a new proposal for a separate Cabinet-level Department of Education at a press conference on February 8, at a Senate Governmental Affairs Committee hearing on the same date, and in a presidential message to Congress on February 13 (H. Doc. 96-52), leaving no doubt that a separate department is high on President Carter's priority list. The new plan is a smaller less expensive version of the measure passed by the Senate last year, but not acted upon by the House. From HEW the Carter proposal includes the Education Division, instructional telecommunications programs, education activities of the Office for Civil Rights, plus such programs from other agencies as the National Science Foundation's science education programs. HEW's Head Start program and the Agriculture Department's child nutrition programs are not included, nor is the HEW vocational rehabilitation program although the latter is included in the bill (S. 210) introduced earlier this year by Sen. Abraham Ribicoff.

Postal Legislation

The Postal Service Act of 1979 was introduced January 15 by Rep. Charles Wilson (D-CA), chair of the House Postal Operations and Services Subcommittee. The bill (HR 79) is a modified version of last year's postal legislation which passed the House but was not acted on in the Senate. The new bill provides for Presidential appointment of the chair of the USPS Board of Governors, and extends the phased rate increases for fourth-class mail over a longer period of time--four more years for the library rate or until 1991, and two more years for the book rate or until 1981. The bill would also allow libraries to return books to a publisher or distributor at the library rate, and allow additional material such as catalogs of books, teaching aids, maps and other interpretative material to be sent at the library rate.

DATA NEEDED: Rep. Wilson plans hearings on HR 79 during March. In preparation for testimony on the measure, the ALA Washington Office needs up-to-date information from libraries on the following: What does your library spend on postage? Compared with last year? Three years ago? What percentage of your library materials do you receive by mail? How often do you return books to publishers or distributors by mail? For what reasons (error, damaged material, return of rental collections, etc.)? What postal problems does your library experience?

ESEA II Basic Skills

The Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and the Humanities held a hearing February 13 on basic skills achievement. Chaired by Sen. Thomas Eagleton (D-MO), the February 13 hearing was the first in a series, with others planned for later this spring. "I'll count these hearings a success," said Sen. Eagleton in his opening statement, "if they can give to the American people and the Congress a clear and balanced view of the current situation in basic skills achievement in our schools and if they provide...guidance for those who will administer the new basic skill title of the 1978 Amendments of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. For me, personally, the inclusion of that special section on reading, writing and computing--the first time all three skills have been addressed in education legislation by Congress--represents a very satisfying, indeed, a mighty proud achievement."

Witnesses testifying were Paul Copperman, author of The Literacy Hoax; Rudolph Flesch, author of Why Johnny Can't Read; and Harold Howe, Ford Foundation Vice-President for Education and Research and former U.S. Commissioner of Education. Among Howe's recommendations: "increase the supply of good children's literature available in classrooms and distribute more free books to children in poor communities."

The Education Amendments of 1978 (PL 95-561) established a new ESEA title II--Basic Skills Improvement. Programs authorized include improvement of instruction in basic skills (section 205), parental participation in basic skills instruction including development and dissemination of materials for use in the home (section 206), and encouragement of the use of television and other technology to improve basic skills instruction (section 207). The latter would include development and acquisition of educational programming and supplemental instructional materials, and assistance for training of teachers and other personnel in use of educational technology, and for teacher training materials. State programs of basic skills improvement are also authorized.

The new ESEA II replaces the National Reading Improvement Act, but does authorize assistance to a variety of agencies and organizations for reading activities such as book distribution to children, reading academies, community efforts to help individuals improve basic skills, and lending or selling books to children, youths, and adults (section 208). In addition, title II continues the inexpensive book distribution program (section 231).

The U.S. Office of Education expects to publish proposed regulations for these programs in the Federal Register in late March or early April. However, copies of a preliminary draft of the proposed regulations are available from: Mr. Thomas Keyes, Right to Read Office, USOE, 400 Maryland Ave., S.W., Donohoe Bldg., Rm. 1150, Washington, D.C. 20202 (202/245-2710). Some programs, including educational technology, dissemination activities, and inexpensive book distribution, will be implemented by contract and will be covered not by regulations, but by RFPs to be published in Commerce Business Daily.

Telecommunications

The Carnegie Commission on the Future of Public Broadcasting issued its report on January 30. An earlier Carnegie Commission report, that of the Carnegie Commission on Educational Television in 1967, resulted in legislation establishing the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). The new commission, created 18 months ago by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and headed by William McGill, President of Columbia University, has found "public broadcasting's financial, organizational and creative structure fundamentally flawed...the invention did not work, or at least not very well."

The major recommendations of the new commission include:

- 1) Replacement of the CPB with a new entity, the Public Telecommunications Trust (PTT), a nongovernmental, nonprofit corporation with financial and administrative responsibilities. Its nine trustees would be appointed by the President from a list drawn up by a panel chaired by the Librarian of Congress.
- 2) Creation of the Program Services Endowment--"a safe place for nurturing creative activity"--as a highly insulated programming arm of the PTT.
- 3) An increase in funding for the system of over 100 percent. Recommended total funding by 1985: \$1.2 billion, with \$570 million coming from nonfederal sources and the remainder from federal funds. Federal funding would come partly from a spectrum use fee.
- 4) Increased funding flowing to public television stations should be spent mainly on programming.
- 5) Completion of the public radio system should be a top priority.
- 6) Three recommendations concerning technology: To bring public television and radio service to at least 90 percent of the population over the next five to seven years (80 percent are now reached by public TV, 50 percent by public radio), to develop a stronger research and development capability, and to adopt a broader and more flexible approach to the delivery of programs and services.
- 7) Mechanisms for public participation in station planning and development should be continued and strengthened.

Copies of the Carnegie Commission's report, A Public Trust, are available for \$2.75 plus 75¢ for postage and handling from: Bantam Books, Dept. DR-47, 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019. The ALA recommendations to the Carnegie Commission, submitted in March 1978, were published in the September 1978 issue of Journal of Library Automation.

Postal Rates

Some libraries have reported that they have been charged an extra \$1.50 when attempting to mail irregular parcels such as film cases. Such a surcharge has been proposed, but two important qualifiers must be noted:

1) A surcharge of \$1.50 for each outside or irregular (non-machineable) parcel mailed at single piece, fourth-class (parcel post) zone rates was to have been put into effect on a temporary basis by the U.S. Postal Service on February 25. However implementation of the surcharge has been delayed pending the outcome of an attempt by United Parcel Service to seek an injunction against this change and another affecting fourth-class parcel post bulk rate mail.

2) More importantly, the surcharge does not apply to the fourth-class library or book rate, so librarians mailing parcels, no matter how "irregular," at the library or book rate should not be charged the extra amount whenever it does go into effect.

All post offices were informed of the surcharge in Postal Bulletin 21178, February 22, and of the delay in implementation by a mailgram dated February 23. Any local postmasters who do not seem to understand the situation should be requested to check with their sectional center manager.

Congressional Committee Lists

In addition to the House and Senate Budget Committee lists referred to on page 2, lists of the House Appropriations Committee and Senate Human Resources Committee members are attached to this newsletter for your future reference. Subcommittee assignments on the Senate Appropriations Committee and the House Education and Labor Committee are not yet official, but those lists will be provided as soon as possible.

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96th Congress, 1st Session

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American Library Association
Washington Office
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(See over for Appropriations
Subcommittees on Labor-HEW,
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ment.)

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American Library Association
Washington Office
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96th Congress, 1st Session

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