



HEADQUARTERS

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LIBRARY

ALA Washington Newsletter

Contents:

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| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Congr. Budget & Reconciliation . . . p. 1 | NLW Legislative Day p. 3 |
| ACTION NEEDED p. 1 | NLW Library Speeches p. 3 |
| Telecommunications--AT&T Tariffs . p. 2. | National School Library Month . p. 3 |
| WHCLIS II p. 2 | Rep. Owens' Dinner for Mr. Josey p. 3 |
| NLW Press Conference p. 2 | Fed. Information Management . . p. 4 |
| | UCNI Resolution p. 4 |

Attachment: Resolution to Form a Coalition on Government Information

Congressional Budget and Reconciliation

At this writing the Senate budget resolution and reconciliation instructions (S.Con.Res. 32) is in the midst of extended Senate floor debate and amendment. A key vote took place on April 30 when the Senate voted 50-49 for the package of revisions to S.Con.Res. 32 negotiated at the White House to gain the President's support. All Democrats voted against this White House/Senate leadership package; Sens. Kasten (R-WI) and Mathias (R-MD) were the only Republicans who voted against it. It would be appropriate for library constituents to thank those who voted no.

The White House/Sen. leadership version of S.Con.Res. 32 is in the process of being further amended--a process expected to last at least through the week of May 6. Various amendments to restore education and library program funding will be offered, including the Function 500 amendment to be offered by Sen. Chiles (D-FL). Sens. Metzenbaum (D-OH) and Burdick (D-ND) will offer an amendment to restore postal revenue foregone funding.

However, another postal amendment expected early in the week is one by Sen. Majority Leader Dole (R-KS) and Sen. Stevens (R-AK), Chairman of the Governmental Affairs Committee which handles postal legislation. The Dole/Stevens amendment would provide only \$100 million of the \$981 million needed in FY 1986 revenue foregone for free mail for the blind and preferred postal rates; another \$400 million is assumed to come from cross subsidization from first class and full commercial rates through future legislation. The legislation would also tightened up eligibility for nonprofit rates.

ACTION NEEDED: Should action still be pending on these amendments, urge Senators to reject the Dole/Stevens postal amendment, support the Metzenbaum/Burdick postal amendment, and the Chiles or other amendments which would restore education and library funding to at least FY 1985 levels.



Telecommunications - AT&T Tariffs

The Federal Communications Commission, in an April 26 decision, allowed AT&T Communications' interstate private line tariffs to take effect April 27, subject to limited investigation and monitoring. The tariffs took effect 18 months after AT&T first proposed a new tariff structure as a result of divestiture of the Bell system and the FCC's access charge policy.

For connections to OCLC's database, the average increase under the new rates is expected to be 22 percent, although for libraries in some areas, the increase may be as high as 50 percent. This is still a substantial impact, but it is much lower than the 73 percent average first expected in the fall of 1983, when the OCLC network with the highest increase was facing 138 percent.

An indication of the impact the library community has had on the tariff process is the fact that an AT&T filing with the FCC on March 21, in which AT&T replied to those parties who commented on the revisions AT&T had requested to its tariffs, included a separate chapter on libraries, headed, "The Revised Tariffs Mitigate Rate Impact on Libraries and Do Not Cause Divergent Impact on Individual Members of the Libraries' Networks."

WHCLIS II

National Library Week saw measures introduced in both the Senate and House for a second White House Conference on Library and Information Services. Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-RI), the original sponsor of legislation which resulted in the 1979 WHCLIS, introduced on April 16, S.J.Res, 112, for a second WHCLIS no later than 1989. See his introductory statement in the April 16 Congressional Record, p. S4249 (daily edition). Rep. Bill Ford (D-MI) introduced H.J.Res 244, an identical measure, on April 18. Both Pell and Ford are inviting cosponsors.

NLW Press Conference

"Closing the Book on 'A Nation of Readers'" was the theme of a press conference sponsored by ALA and Rep. Major Owens (D-NY) on April 15 at the beginning of National Library Week. Rep. Owens, ALA President E. J. Josey, ALA Washington Office Director Eileen Cooke, PLA President Charles Robinson, and Francis Buckley, chair of the ALA Ad Hoc Committee to form a Coalition on Government Information, called attention to the Administration's zero budget for library programs and Administration attempts to restrict access to government information.

Librarian Rep. Owens spoke and issued a press release in which he said:

This year it appears that government funding for libraries is under a more intense attack than ever before. In addition to recommending zero in the budget for the Library Services and Construction Act, the present administration has signaled its intent to wage a full scale war on the library and information support services provided by the federal government.

Owens cited Office of Management and Budget policies to contract out federal libraries, eliminate government publications, and centralize information resources management. He concluded that it is "important that the attention of the Congress be focused on ways to challenge the sweeping powers being assumed by the OMB. If

far-reaching changes must be made in federal publication policies and information services, it is the duty of the Congress to seek a more non-partisan, responsible and rational way of reviewing and reshaping this vital function."

ALA President E. J. Josey also cited the OMB information resources management draft circular (see story below), the zero budget for LSCA, HEA II, and NCLIS, and the elimination of postal revenue foregone appropriations. Robinson gave specifics on the impact of eliminating LSCA, and Buckley said the OMB information policy circular's reliance on the private sector and on fees does not assure public access and would set up barriers to many. He urged other groups with an interest in public access to government information to join with ALA in a coalition.

NLW Library Legislative Day

Over 375 library supporters from 44 states and the District of Columbia participated in the April 16 Library Legislative Day of organized lobbying during National Library Week, sponsored by the D. C. Library Association and the ALA Washington Office. This year's event was enhanced by several other National Library Week events described in this newsletter, and the timing was critical in terms of the Senate congressional budget deliberations.

NLW Library Speeches

Rep. Major Owens' special order on April 17 during National Library Week prompted 26 House Members to make one-minute speeches about libraries, many of them protesting the Administration's zero budget for library programs and postal subsidies. See the April 17 Congressional Record, pp. H2089-2101, for speeches by Rep. Owens, Thomas of GA, Tallon, Frenzel, Hammerschmidt, Roe, Crockett, Rangel, Addabbo, Downey, Mrazek, Campbell, Spratt, Vento, Ackerman, Derrick, Manton, Wirth, Bruce, Green, Morrison of CT, and Kaptur; and pp. E1527-8 for Schumer. See also speeches by Rep. Lantos in 4/18 CR, p. E1577; Rep. Collins in 4/24 CR, p. E1687; and Rep. Biaggi in 4/24 CR, p. E1740-41. Also see 4/16 CR, p. S4210-11, for a library speech by Sen. Moynihan.

National School Library Month

The Senate passed by voice vote on April 15 at the beginning of National Library Week S.J.Res. 52, designating the month of April 1985 as National School Library Month and calling on the President to issue a proclamation.

Rep. Owens' Dinner for E. J. Josey

About 300 persons attended a dinner hosted by Rep. Major R. Owens (D-NY) and the Braintrust Network Association in the Cannon House Office Building on April 15 in honor of ALA President E. J. Josey. Rep. Thomas Foley (D-WA), Majority Whip, brought greetings from the House. Josey associates who paid tribute to him included: Marie Harris, Chair of the Braintrust Network Association, Eileen D. Cooke, ALA Washington Office Director; Patricia Berger, past president of the Federal Librarians Round Table; and Clara Stanton Jones, ALA past president. Don King of King Research presented a special report on state and federal libraries.

Federal Information Management

On April 29, Rep. Glenn English (D-OK), Chairman of the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Government Information, Justice, and Agriculture, held the first in a series of hearings on the electronic collection and dissemination of information by federal agencies. The hearing focused on both the development of the EDGAR system at the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) proposed circular on management of federal information resources (see April 3 ALA Washington Newsletter). Rep. Major Owens (D-NY), a member of the Government Operations Committee, concluded his testimony about the proposed circular by stating:

We are about to make a monumental change in the way our modern democracy operates. OMB should be blocked in its attempt to disguise this change as a mere bookkeeping operation. Instead of this process going forward via the Draft OMB Circular, it should be halted and there should be an Emergency Commission on Federal Information appointed. Such a non-partisan, broad based Commission could examine the full implications of every proposed action and utilize the expertise of its members to objectively develop policies and practices which truly meet the needs of the American people in this age of information.

Francis J. Buckley, Jr., Assistant Director for Technical Services at the Detroit Public Library and Chair of an ALA Ad Hoc Committee established to form a Coalition on Government Information, and Eileen D. Cooke, Director of the ALA Washington Office, testified on behalf of the Association. Buckley said that the OMB draft policy circular should be revised to clearly spell out dissemination required by law through the Depository Library Program and to provide more balance between public and private sector interests. He recommended that there be a public review process to collect public concerns regarding proposed elimination of government publications, and that all proposed reductions be listed in the Federal Register for comment.

Joseph W. Duncan, Staff Economist for Dun and Bradstreet, testified for the Information Industry Association and commended OMB for its efforts in implementing its information policy functions under the Paperwork Reduction Act. Duncan was formerly Chief Statistician for the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in OMB, the office which has developed the proposed circular.

The Ad Hoc Committee is in the process of organizing a Coalition on Government Information of concerned organizations which could represent commonly held positions, share information among participating organizations, and encourage executive and legislative branch policies and activities which assure that information needs of citizens are not restricted. Buckley has invited any individual or organization interested in participating to respond to him or to Eileen Cooke with the name of a contact person. Buckley can be reached at the Detroit Public Library, 5201 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, MI 48202 (313/833-4028).

The ALA Council resolution calling for the formation of such a coalition which was passed at Midwinter is attached to this newsletter.

UCNI Restrictions

The Department of Energy issued final regulations in the April 22 Federal Register (pp. 15818-29) to prohibit the unauthorized dissemination of certain information identified as Unclassified Controlled Nuclear Information

These regulations describe how government information is determined to be UCNI, establish minimum protection standards, specify who may have access to UCNI, and establish procedures for the imposition of penalties for violation of these regulations.

The first in a series of hearings on the electronic collection and dissemination of information by federal agencies. The hearing focused on both the development of the KODAR system at the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) proposed circular on management of federal information resources (see April 3 AIA Meeting Newsletter). Rep. Major Owens (D-WV), a member of the Government Operations Committee, concluded his testimony about the proposed circular by stating:

We are about to make a momentous change in the way our modern democracy operates. OMB should be blocked in its attempt to displace this change as a mere bookkeeping operation. Instead of this process being forwarded via the Draft OMB Circular, it should be placed and there should be an Emergency Committee on Federal Information Operations. Such a non-partisan, broad based Commission could examine the full implications of every proposed action and utilize the expertise of its members to objectively develop policies and practices which truly meet the needs of the American people in this age of information.

Francis A. Buckley, Jr., Assistant Director for Technical Services at the Detroit Public Library and Chair of an AIA ad hoc Committee established to form a Coalition on Government Information, and William D. Cooke, Director of the AIA Washington Office, testified on behalf of the Association. Buckley said that the OMB draft policy circular should be revised to clearly spell out dissemination required by law through the proprietary library system and to provide more balance between public and private sector interests. He recommended that there be a public review process to collect public comments regarding proposed elimination of government publications, and that all proposed reductions be listed in the Federal Register for comment.

Joseph W. Damsen, Staff Economist for IMA and Newsletter, testified for the Information Industry Association and commended OMB for its efforts in implementing the Information Policy Function under the Paperwork Reduction Act. Damsen was formerly Chief Statistician for the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in OMB, the office which has developed the proposed circular.

The ad hoc committee is in the process of organizing a Coalition on Government Information of concerned organizations which could represent community based groups, state information agency participating organizations, and encourage executive and legislative branch policies and activities which ensure that information needs of citizens are not restricted. Buckley has invited any individual or organization interested in participating to respond to him or to William Cooke with the name of a contact person. Buckley can be reached at the Detroit Public Library, 2301 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, MI 48202 (313/833-6028).

The AIA Council resolution calling for the formation of such a coalition which was passed at Milwaukee is attached to this newsletter.

UCNI Regulations

The Department of Energy issued final regulations in the April 25 Federal Register (pp. 25818-20) to prohibit the unauthorized dissemination of certain information identified as Government Controlled Nuclear Information.

RESOLUTION TO FORM A COALITION ON GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

- WHEREAS, A primary tenet of a free society is complete and ready access to government information and publications, which are imperative for an informed society; and
- WHEREAS, Freedom of information for the American public is being directly and indirectly affected by fiscal pressures that have limited access to government information; and
- WHEREAS, The taxpayer is being limited in access to unclassified information developed with government funds; and
- WHEREAS, User communities are often not consulted concerning changes in the collection and dissemination of government information; and
- WHEREAS, The use of secrecy in relation to government information is currently being increased by Federal government agencies; and
- WHEREAS, Proposals have been made to curtail the freedom of expression of former and current Federal government employees; and
- WHEREAS, Proposed government regulations dealing with protection of "unclassified controlled nuclear information" have serious implications for libraries, scientists, and other groups; and
- WHEREAS, The press and various educational, scientific, consumer, and other citizen groups are becoming concerned and beginning to seek ways to reverse current trends limiting the production and access to government information; and
- WHEREAS, Recent government policies have had a serious effect on scholarly and scientific research, libraries, and the right of the public to know about their government; now, therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That the Council of the American Library Association establish an Ad Hoc Committee to be appointed by the President of ALA to identify other concerned organizations and to form a coalition to investigate the problem and seek legislative and executive efforts to examine the collection, analysis, and dissemination of government information vital to the well being of the American public; and, be it
- FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Ad Hoc Committee responsible for forming the Coalition be composed of representatives from the ALA Legislation Committee, the Government Documents Round Table, the Intellectual Freedom Committee, and other interested ALA groups; and, be it
- FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Ad Hoc Committee present a progress report at the 1985 Annual Conference.

Adopted by the Council of the
American Library Association
Washington, D. C.
January 9, 1985
(Council Document #28.7)