

ALA - Washington Office - Testimony
5/20/60

Statement by Emerson Greenaway
Director, Free Library of Philadelphia
on H.R. 11140

Before the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee
May 20, 1960

LIBRARY OF THE
AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
OFFICIAL FILE

CRITICAL FILE

VERTICAL FILE

My name is Emerson Greenaway, and I am the Director of the Free Library of Philadelphia, and immediate Past President of the American Library Association. I am appearing before you today as a representative of that Organization, a nonprofit, professional association of more than 23,000 members, consisting of librarians, trustees, and friends of libraries interested in the development, extension, and improvement of libraries as essential factors in the educational, social, and cultural needs of our Nation.

Librarians and users of libraries have long appreciated the aid given by the Congress to the communication of ideas, culture, and information by the establishment of a special postage rate for books and a special library book rate. The Congress has given formal recognition to this fact in designating the Educational Materials Rate and the Library Materials Rate as a public service function in the Postal Policy Act of 1958. This action in the public interest has enabled public and other types of libraries to extend their services to all areas of the Nation and to all classes and ages of its citizens.

The American Library Association, however, does feel obliged to protest the two new proposed rate increases: one to raise the postage rate on Educational Materials from 9 to 10 cents for the first pound and from 5 to 6 cents on each succeeding pound; and the second, to raise the postage rate on Library Materials from 4 to 5 cents on the first pound and from 1 to 3 cents on each succeeding pound. In the case of the Educational Materials Rate, the increase is calculated at roughly 16%. In the case of the Library Materials Rate, on the basis that the average weight of the parcels carrying these library materials is approximately 5 pounds, the increase is calculated to be 100%.

In both cases, libraries will be hit by these increases. Libraries, in most instances, pay postage on the books they purchase. This is especially...

true in small cities and rural areas where shipments by truck are not feasible. Libraries for the most part are supported by taxes, their budgets are tight, and any of these new postage charges mean simply one thing -- fewer books for the education, information, and culture of our citizens. Libraries have high standards of selection and the increases rate will reduce the available book funds for the purchase of wholesome, inspiring, and instructive books.

Parenthetical ly, it should be noted that the need for expanded public library service was recognized by the 84th Congress which passed the Library Services Act of 1956 and appropriated Federal money to be matched with State money to remedy the situation. Here again the additional postage charges will be passed on to libraries and diminish the amount of library materials they can buy.

In general, it should be noted that the proposed increase in the Education Materials Rate will affect all types of libraries which purchase books and other library materials because the publisher or jobber generally adds mailing costs to the bill. This is true whether the purchaser be a public library, a college or university library or a school library. In addition, all libraries will be materially affected by the proposed increase in first class rates which will again have to be taken from the funds in the book budget.

The Library Materials Rate has encouraged the lending of books by public libraries to individuals in the non-urban places, and to other libraries in those areas. The public libraries have increased their lending to the rural areas, and have made available to children, young people, and adults the best of our recorded knowledge, material on current events, and works of inspiration and information.

College and university libraries, likewise, use the Library Materials Rate to lend their library resources beyond the confines of the campus. These needed books go by mail through interlibrary loan arrangements to other institutions, to scientists, to technicians, research workers, and just average citizens.

The extent of this inter-library lending is very large and has been growing constantly. Some idea of its magnitude is seen by the estimates of a group studying the question:

Library Materials Rate

Estimated Interlibrary Loan Transactions - 1958

University and college libraries	250,000 loans x 2 = 500,000	mailings
Public libraries	50,000 loans x 2 = 100,000	"
Government libraries	*25,000 loans x 2 = 50,000	"
Special libraries	125,000 loans x 2 = 250,000	"
	900,000	

*Estimated number sent by governmental libraries to non-governmental libraries, 1/7 of the total loans of 175,000.

Estimates on the increased cost to libraries or their patrons would amount of something like this:

Present rate 900,000 at 9 cents per package -- \$81,000

Proposed rate 900,000 at 18 cents per package--\$162,000

In the United States there are some 6,500 public library systems, 50 State library extension systems, about 200 State-supported libraries, over 1800 college and university libraries, approximately 25,000 secondary school libraries and an estimated 30,000 elementary school libraries. All of these libraries will be affected by the new rates. A letter of May 6, 1960 sent to some of these libraries by the American Library Association brought these replies:

Effect of Increase in Library Materials Rate

<u>Library</u>	<u>Estimated Increases Cost to Libraries</u>	<u>Method of Absorption</u>
University of Illinois	\$510	Reduction in book purchases
Oberlin College	150	" " "
University of Connecticut	235	" " "
California State Library	4000	" " "
Kentucky State Library Extension Div.	1143	" " "
Louisiana State Library	4250	" " "

May 20, 1950

<u>Library</u>	<u>Estimated Increased Cost to Libraries</u>	<u>Method of Absorption</u>
Missouri State Library	2630	Reduction in book purchases
Montana State Library	700	" " " "
New Mexico State Library	3410	" " " "
North Carolina State Library	240	" " " "
Pennsylvania State Library	450	" " " "
Vermont Public Library Commission	185	" " " "
Southwest Wisconsin Library Center	100	" " " "
Clinton-Essex County Library, N.Y.	660	" " " "
Prince George's County Library, Md.	115	" " " "
Waukegan Public Library, Illinois	100	" " " "
Free Library of Philadelphia	85	" " " "

Although individually some of the amounts are not large, when taken in connection with the total numbers of libraries, they assume significant proportions.

Demand on libraries continue to increase with the rapid growth and re-distribution of the population, the rise in the educational level of our people, and the growing complexities of our civilization. Interlibrary loans and direct loans by mail to meet the information and book needs of people everywhere are becoming an increasingly important but costly part of library service. Libraries want to share their informational resources and should be encouraged to remain a part of our national network of information. At this time of growing concern over meeting educational needs, it would seem to us to be in the public interest that the encouragement now given to the purchase and distribution of books and other educational materials as a matter of Congressional policy be continued by the maintenance of the present Educational Materials and Library Materials Rates.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, for the opportunity you have given me to present the views of the American Library Association on this proposed legislation.