

*Mr. Clift*

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Library*

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STATEMENT BY GERMAINE KRETTEK  
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BEFORE THE SENATE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE  
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VERTICAL FILE

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
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My name is Germaine Krettek. I am director of the Washington Office of the American Library Association, a nonprofit, professional association of more than 20,000 members, consisting of librarians, trustees, and friends of libraries interested in the development, extension, and improvement of libraries as essential factors in the educational program of the Nation.

I am extremely grateful to the Subcommittee for allowing me to appear before it, so that I may request, on behalf of the American Library Association, that the full amount of \$7,500,000 authorized by the Library Services Act for grants be recommended for Fiscal 1959. As you know, the Act authorized annually, for a period of five years, grants of \$7,500,000 on a matching basis to stimulate the States to extend and improve their public library services to the small towns, villages, and farming communities without such services or with inadequate services. This legislation was supported not only by the American Library Association, but by many educational, civic, labor, and farm organizations.

The results of this legislation to date have been tremendous; they promise to be even more so, if the small amount authorized, \$7,500,000, is appropriated.

Already in the less than two years of operation and with appropriations considerably below the authorized amount, the Library Services Act has made a good start towards accomplishing the objectives which its Congressional sponsors envisioned for it.

Although there is no fixed pattern for State plans and each State is free to make a plan best suited to its particular needs, these are some of the accomplishments of the act:

1. 49 State and Territorial library extension agencies are strengthening their staffs, their book resources, reference, loan, and consultant services in order to give greater assistance to the rural areas; another Territory is on the



point of participating in the program;

2. 126 county and regional library demonstrations in 37 States are underway, resulting in many economies of operation;

3. 52 bookmobile demonstrations are taking place in 31 States;

4. 27 groups of libraries in 18 States are cooperating under the State plans to exchange books and other materials, and to share book resources;

5. 15 projects have already been set up to centralize the cataloging and the preparation of books, and also economize through large scale buying. The tax dollar is thus made to go further and to render greater service.

6. 14 Branches of State Libraries are being developed in 10 States in order to bring books and information to rural people who have had no library available to them.

7. 25 States are improving rural library service through in-service training opportunities;

8. Over 300 rural counties with populations totaling 7,500,000 children and adults are now receiving new or improved service under the program;

9. State funds, although still inadequate for the extension of rural library service, have increased 38 percent since 1956, the date of the passage of the Act. The stimulation of the Federal funds has been a potent factor in this progress.

10. In view of the urgency for training scientists, many States have projects involving science and technical books for the youth in the rural areas. For example, Mr. Roger McDonough, Director, Division of the State Library, Archives and History, New Jersey Department of Education, writes: "All the preparatory work is just now coming to fruition and the actual bookmobile operation at the Tri-County Library project has begun. ... I think if the Members of the Congress could see the splendid collection of some 2,000 books that were distributed in the first bookmobile load, including first-rate, up-to-date works in physics, chemistry and mathematics, they would be as impressed as I am at the wonderful potential this program holds in terms of the total educational program for our rural citizens."



These accomplishments are good, but the program is still running behind schedule. Any appropriation of less than \$7,500,000 for Fiscal 1959 will seriously jeopardize this library program, just getting in full swing, and many worthwhile projects will have to be curtailed or abandoned.

The States in good faith obtained more funds from their legislatures to meet the sums required to match, they surveyed their needs, they drew up 5-year plans, they determined the geographical areas to be covered each year, they negotiated and made agreements with these areas and they made plans for staffs and equipment to carry out the purposes of the Act.

The American Library Association is recommending for Fiscal 1959 an appropriation of \$7,500,000. The \$7,500,000 set in 1946 when the Bill was introduced was not a random figure; it did not include any surplus money inserted in anticipation of cuts; and it did not allow for the great inflation which occurred during the past ten years. The figure was determined after careful study by the American Library Association in 1946 as the absolute minimum to trigger significant educational development.

In the House hearings on the appropriations for Fiscal 1959 (p.152) the Commissioner of Education, upon direct questioning by Mr. Fogarty, said that the Office of Education had originally requested \$7,500,000 for 1959, because the program had a great deal of merit and there was a basis for thinking that the States would come forward to use effectively the full authorization.

There is every reason to believe that the States can use effectively an allocation based on a \$7,500,000 appropriation. Therefore, on behalf of the American Library Association and the many millions who will benefit from this program, I urge that this Subcommittee recommend the full authorization of \$7,500,000 for grants so that the States which have now laid firm foundations may be enabled to build the structure of good library service for all the people of these United States

I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the Subcommittee for giving me time to be heard.