

Hearing held on LC fee legislation

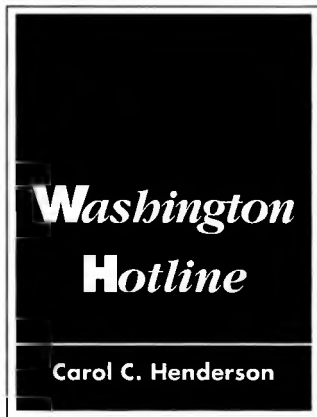
On July 22 the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration held a hearing on S. 2748, the Library of Congress Fund Act of 1992. Librarian of Congress James Billington said the bill was needed to permit LC to meet needs for specialized products and services which go beyond the library's tax-supported basic functions.

Patricia Glass Schuman, immediate past-president of ALA, said the legislation, while including some ALA suggestions, still has problem areas. The placement of "electronic access to the contents of the collections" in the specialized full-cost-recovery category intensifies the problem of where to draw the line between core and fee-based services. Another problem is whether core services will be frozen in time rather than evolving. Her testimony was based on a resolution passed by the ALA Council on July 1 in San Francisco. Lee Anne George, George Washington University Library, spoke about the demand for fee-based services in libraries based on her own library's experience and as immediate past-chair of the Fee-based Information Service Centers in Academic Libraries, an ACRL discussion group. Barbara Markuson of INCOLSA, who chaired an ALA task force on LC's earlier licensing proposal, urged Congress to pass the legislation promptly and to resist any attempts to place further restrictions on the library.

LC has since offered to reopen discussions with the library community, and ALA has agreed to continue to work with LC officials and other library groups to improve the legislation.

NCLIS holds open forum on NREN

The U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science on July 20-21 held an open forum on library and information services' roles in the National Research and Education Network. The findings will be made available to the Office of Science and Technology Policy prior to its December report to Congress on



several NREN policy issues specified in the High-Performance Computing Act.

ALA witness Elaine Albright, University of Maine and ALA Committee on Legislation Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Telecommunications chair, cited the need for low-cost, user-friendly access to the network for libraries and schools in every part of the country. Patricia Wand, ACRL, said that the library

and education communities, including the Department of Education, must have a voice in NREN development. Jack Sulzer, speaking for GODORT, discussed the role that the nation's 1,400 depository libraries could play in the development of the NREN. Other witnesses from academic and research entities included Richard Dougherty, University of Michigan; Dan Mulholland, Acting Deputy Librarian of Congress; Paul Evan Peters, Coalition for Networked Information; and Duane Webster, Association of Research Libraries.

GPO WINDO/Gateway bills have library support

On July 23 the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration and the Committee on House Administration held a joint hearing on S. 2813, the GPO Gateway to Government Act, and HR 2772, the GPO WINDO Act.

The two similar bills would establish an electronic gateway at the Government Printing Office to which users could connect via computer networks to gain access to dozens of databases containing federal government information. Senate Committee Chairman Wendell Ford (D-Ky.) concluded the standing-room-only hearing by stating his intention to move the legislation this session.

ALA Immediate Past-President Patricia Glass Schuman urged speedy passage of the legislation. Public printer Robert Houk stated that the bills were an idea whose time has come. Witnesses from academic institutions included Richard West, University of California, for the Coalition for Networked Information; Brian Kahin, Harvard University; and William Graves, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. ■

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