

# WASHINGTON HOTLINE



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**Federal Information Policy.** Summarizing recent development on this topic in one page will be a challenge. To take the latest first, the June 15 *Federal Register* (54 FR 25554-59) contains the Office of Management and Budget response to public comments on its January 4 notice on electronic dissemination, two-thirds of which came from the library community. The notice formally withdrew the January proposal and announced that OMB would review and revise parts of Circular A-130, OMB's 1985 policy statement on Federal Information Resources Management. ALA and the Association of Research Libraries had urged that this be done. Librarians are urged to give the notice a close reading and comment by the August 14 deadline.

The Paperwork Reduction Act, which authorizes the information policy activities of OMB, is up for reauthorization in this Congress. The House Subcommittee on Government Information, Justice and Agriculture has conducted a series of hearings on federal information dissemination policies and practices. Witnesses included three ACRL members: Kaye Gapen, Nancy Kranich, and Harold Shill. Chairman Robert Wise (D-WV) has introduced HR 2381 to reform the information dissemination policy functions of OMB. Sections of this bill may be incorporated in PRA legislation being developed by the parent Government Operations Committee chaired by Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI). The Working Group on Government Information Policy in which ARL, ALA and other public interest groups have participated has reviewed and commented on a draft of this legislation. The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee has a new subcommittee this year on Government Information and Regulations. Subcommittee Chair Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) has also held PRA reauthorization hearings.

The House Administration Subcommittee on Procurement and Printing has held a series of hearings to review the printing chapters of Title 44 of the *U.S. Code* in light of the changes in the past decade in electronic information format, distribution, and technology. Sandra McAninch, chair of ALA's GODORT, was among the witnesses. Chairman Jim Bates (D-CA) said the subcommittee would rely on the OTA report, *Informing the Nation*, and future legislation is expected.

The May 30 issue of GPO's *Administrative Notes* announced: "On May 3, 1989, the GPO received Congressional approval to implement the electronic dissemination pilot projects that have been under review since June 1988." The projects include two online products (the Commerce Department's Electronic Bulletin Board, and the Energy Department's *Energy Research Abstracts*) and three CD-ROM products (various censuses from the Bureau of the Census, the EPA's *Toxic Release Inventory*, and the *Congressional Record* through the Joint Committee on Printing). On May 22, 1989, the GPO General Counsel provided a legal opinion that allows GPO to include additional electronically formatted products in the Depository Library Program.

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