

WASHINGTON HOTLINE



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The President's fiscal year 1988 budget was the first to exceed one trillion dollars, but the sixth in a row to eliminate all Education Department academic and public library assistance. Also zeroed out in the budget were nonprofit postal rates and college work study.

In addition, the Administration would rescind or "unappropriate" funds already provided by Congress for FY '87 for several library programs including the Higher Education Act II-B graduate library school fellowships and the II-C research library grants. If your institution has a II-B or II-C grant application pending, protest the proposed rescission to your members of Congress immediately. Even if Congress does not approve the rescissions, the request holds up release of funds for 45 legislative days, to expire about March 15.

Two other HEA library programs are not currently funded, but were just revised in the HEA reauthorization signed into law last October. In this deficit reduction climate, it is not at all certain that Congress will fund II-A resources grants to needy colleges, and II-D technology grants, without grass roots action.

The II-A grants were last funded for the 1983-84 academic year. Funding committees said they would not provide money again until the program was targeted to need. Based on ACRL-developed need criteria, Congress authorized \$10 million in FY '87 and such sums as necessary for each of the next four years for grants of between \$2,000 and \$10,000 depending on enrollment range to libraries ranking below their institutional class norm in both materials expenditures/FTE student and volumes held/FTE student.

For the new II-D College Library Technology and Cooperation Grants, Congress authorized \$5 million for grants of at least \$15,000 for up to three years with a one-third matching requirement for technological equipment for sharing of library resources, consortia and joint use library projects, networking, and other special purposes.

If funding subcommittees receive few letters or visits, new or unfunded programs won't even come up for discussion. It's up to interested library constituents, who have immense influence. If the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittees are sent numerous letters on II-A and II-D, receive inquiries from colleagues whose library constituents have written, and are visited at home and on Library Legislative Day (April 7), then II-A and II-D will receive fair consideration for FY '88 funding. Start now with your first letter. The Chairmen are Sen. Lawton Chiles (D-FL) and Rep. William Natcher (D-KY). Ranking minority members are Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-OR) and Rep. Silvio Conte (R-MA).