

## The first 100 days: Day 30 and counting . . .

The first 100 days of the 104th Congress demonstrate the absolute necessity for eternal vigilance. While some initiatives have been expected as part of the "Contract with America," other legislative efforts appear to be attempts to move issues through on a fast track in the wake of the Republican takeover of Congress.

# Washington Hotline

Lynne E. Bradley

## FY96 Clinton budget for libraries announced

**HEA library programs all zeroes.** All Higher Education Act library programs (\$11,416,000) would be eliminated in the administration's proposed FY1996 budget. The rationale in Department of Education budget documents is that other sources of funding could support these activities. Nor does the budget contain funding for the new ESEA III-F School Library Resources Program enacted last October. However, ESEA III educational technology programs would be increased from the current \$40 million to \$83 million.

Multitype library networking and resource sharing are threatened in the proposed zeroing out of Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), title III. The LSCA programs currently funded under title III—interlibrary cooperation and resource sharing (under which much Internet connectivity, training, and technical support has been funded)—would be zeroed out, along with title VI library literacy projects. The administration's rationale given for proposing elimination of LSCA III is that title I funds could be used for networking and resource sharing activities that improve services provided by public libraries. However, current law does not allow LSCA I funds to be used for any projects that involve more than public libraries, thus making multitype library networking and resource sharing illegal under title I.

**LSCA I and II only programs included.** The Clinton administration's FY96 budget sent to Congress on February 6 requests funding for

only titles I and II of LSCA. LSCA I (public library services) is recommended for a \$6 million increase; LSCA II (public library construction and technology enhancement) would be level funded.

### Outlook in Congress?

The details of the Clinton budget are not likely to have much impact in the Republican-controlled Congress. However, the fact that the total for Department of Edu-

cation library programs would be cut from the current \$144 million to \$106 million (or by 26 percent) will make it that much more difficult to restore the difference or add to it.

**Rescissions requested for HEA II-B and LSCA VI.** The administration's budget includes a request that Congress rescind (that is, defund) monies already appropriated for the Higher Education Act (HEA) title II-B library education and training program, and for the LSCA VI library literacy projects. HEA library fellowships and institutes (HEA II-B) and library literacy (LSCA IV) were vulnerable because they were not included in the president's budget last year, have been targeted by the "Reinventing Government" reports and by many Congressional cut lists before, and do not spend out grant dollars until later in the year.

**Action alert: Appropriations committees should be contacted.** All library programs, whether or not included in the president's budget, are at risk of zero funding in fiscal year 1996. It is imperative that library supporters contact the various Congressional committees. Don't underestimate the power of constituent messages to Congress supporting federal library programs. Library supporters should contact their representatives and senators to urge funding of the Department of Education's HEA, LSCA, and ESEA library programs at a level of \$1 per person in the United States. To meet this goal, Congress should appropriate an additional 43 cents per person to help libraries ramp up, reach out, and retrain for the 21st century—not cut back on their investment in library services!

Contact members of the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on

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## Clinton administration FY96 proposed budget Table of selected library programs

Program	FY 1995 Approp.	FY 1996 Admin. Req.
	(in thousands)	
<b>Library Services and Construction Act</b>	\$132,745	\$106,927
I, public library services	83,227	89,135
II, public library construction	17,792	17,792
III, interlibrary cooperation	23,700	0
IV, Indian library services	2% of LSCA	I, II, and III
VI, library literacy programs	8,026	0
<b>Higher Education Act</b>	\$11,416	\$0
II-A, college library technology	0	0
II-B, library education	4,916	0
II-B, research and demonstrations	6,500	0
II-C, research libraries	0	0

Labor-HHS-Education. Although the initial emphasis should be on contacting the House side, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee should also be contacted as soon as possible. The phone number at the U.S. Capitol is (202) 224-3121.

### Other critical legislation

Several important issues are moving rapidly through Congress. One bill on a fast track is the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 which was introduced on February 6 as H.R. 830. One provision dropped in the bill markup would have seriously threatened the public's ownership of government information. The so-called "West Provision" [sec. 3518(f)] would have drastically reduced the public's rights under the copyright law and the Freedom of Information Act, while increasing the profits of private sector vendors because it would have given them ownership of public data. Another provision [sec. 3506(d)(4)(D)] would have given the Office of Management and Budget the authority to grant waivers to agencies to increase user fees above the cost of dissemination. Neither of these provisions are in the "Contract with America," and many believe this was a last-minute, below-the-table attempt to sneak in language to benefit special interests. Members of the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight will now address these two provisions separately as they proceed on H.R.

830. A similar bill, S. 244, was ordered reported by the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee on February 1.

On February 1 Senator Exon (D-Neb.) introduced S. 314, the Communications Decency Act of 1995, which holds various telecommunications providers—from cable operators to telecommunications networkers—responsible for "obscene" material on their networks.

This raises some grave first amendment questions. Watch the *ALAWONewsline*, an electronic publication of the ALA Washington Office, for additional updates about this bill as well as other legislative proposals to rewrite the Communications Act of 1934.

### ACRL legislative network: Supporting academic libraries

As a new staff member in the ALA Washington Office, I enjoyed meeting with members of the ACRL Government Relations Committee at ALA Midwinter about expanding the legislative network begun by this committee. The committee will also develop advocacy training customized to academic and college librarians and their supporters. Indeed, eternal vigilance is required and necessary, but it is also rewarding. I'm glad to be working with academic libraries again and to work with your legislative network in our mutual goal of supporting all libraries.

### Library legislation day rescheduled to May 9

This year the date for Library Legislation Day was rescheduled from April 11 to May 9 because Congress will not be in session at that time in April. For additional information about Library Legislation Day in Washington, D.C., watch *ALAWONewsline* or contact your state library association for information about state-related activities. ■