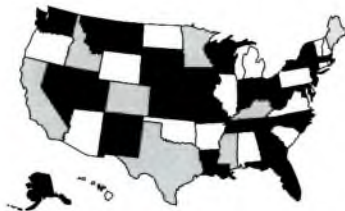


# Washington Hotline



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OMB A-130. The Office of Management and Budget announced plans to revise Circular A-130, Management of Federal Information Resources, in the March 4 *Federal Register* (56 FR 9026-28). In this advance notice (not a draft of the revised circular), OMB invites comments by May 3 on the issues most requiring revision, on new formulation of policy, and on policy directions. Interested librarians are encouraged to submit comments directly to OMB, and to contact the ALA Washington Office (by April 24) to contribute to the ALA response.

NREN. Bills to create a National Research and Education Network appear to be on a faster track this year. The Administration's very similar initiative, backed up with a budget request, has increased interest and added to bipartisan support. Both House and Senate committees held hearings in March. On March 19 the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee approved a revised version of S. 272 which included some of the amendments suggested by ALA and the Association of Research Libraries.

Sen. Albert Gore Jr. (D-TN), during the Senate hearing he chaired on March 5, mentioned speaking at the ALA Midwinter Meeting, where he had seen a demonstration of NSFNET. Sen. Gore also testified at House hearings on March 7 on HR 656.

A lead witness at both hearings was Dr. D. Allan Bromley, Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, who described the high-performance computing and communications initiative included in the Administration's budget request. The NREN is just one of several components of this multiagency initiative which includes a total of \$638 million for FY '92, an increase of \$149 million over similar programs in FY '91.

Among the public witnesses at the hearings, at least three from higher education mentioned libraries. Donald Langenberg, Chancellor of the University of Maryland System, emphasized the potential inherent in linking NREN to every school, public library, and museum. He called for a new breed of information professionals and new schools for training them. He also urged that planning and development be guided by users of information technology, not by information specialists or government policymakers.

Kenneth King, President of EDUCOM, indicated that libraries have a critical role to play in the NREN both as providers of electronic information and as access points for their users. He attached to his testimony a January 25 letter outlining a policy framework of elements which should be added to the NREN legislation developed by 20 education, library, and computing organizations (including ALA and several other library associations) comprising a Partnership for the NREN.

Glenn Ricart of SURANET, a regional network coordinated through the Southeastern Universities Research Association, and linked to the NSFNET, called for amending the

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# Getting connected to the White House Conference through the ACRL Legislative Network

by Hiram L. Davis

*Chair, ACRL Government Relations Committee, and  
Member, ACRL Task Force on WHCLIS*

A collective voice from the academic library community is imperative if we are to respond proactively to the forthcoming White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services (WHCLIS) and to the broad range of governmental issues confronting academic libraries. A coherent plan of action from the Association will be essential in implementing Conference recommendations for further improvement of library and information services aimed at increasing productivity, expanding literacy, and strengthening democracy, as we approach the 21st century.

## Impetus for a network

The ACRL Strategic Planning Document provides the platform for a national legislative network: Goal III. To promote and speak for the interests of academic and research librarianship; Subgoal B. To monitor and speak out on government and private sector activities likely to affect academic and research librarianship, including

legislation and fiscal and political support at all levels; Objective 1. Establish ACRL as the association with the authority to speak for the academic library profession on issues of importance to higher education and academic libraries; Objective 2. Strengthen membership efforts to affect and influence government and private sector activities, including legislation, funding, and quality higher education. Under this rubric ACRL charged its Government Relations Committee (GRC): "To take a direct and active role in formulating objectives and in planning and coordinating support for legislative action at the national level which may affect the welfare of academic and research libraries."

## Developing the network

One of the challenges faced by the GRC was to identify an appropriate model or structure to mobilize the academic community into an effective and responsive network for the profession. It was decided that ACRL, through its 40+ state-wide

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legislation to provide a more direct voice for the research and education communities the NREN is intended to serve. He also said that libraries should be included.

**ALA ACTIONS.** ALA's statement, submitted for both hearing records, built on the January 16 ALA Council resolution on the NREN and the January 25 Partnership for the NREN policy framework. ALA called for eligibility for libraries, a voice for involved constituencies in network policy, high-capacity network connections with all 50 states, education and training funds, and direct connections to the NREN for at least 200 key libraries and library organizations and dial-up access for multitype libraries within each state. Prime candidates suggested for direct connection (some of which are already connected to the current Internet) were national libraries, regional depository libraries, state library agencies, library networks, libraries in geographic areas with a scarcity of NREN connections, and libraries with specialized or unique resources.



**THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON  
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES  
1991**