Library Services and Construction Act: Joint Hearing (April 11, 1989): Speech 02

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Opening Statement of Senator Pell
Joint Hearing on the Reauthorization of the Library Services and Construction Act
April 11, 1989

It is a pleasure to join forces with our colleagues on the House Subcommittee on Post-secondary Education today in this joint hearing on the Reauthorization of the Library Services and Construction Act. I welcome all of our witnesses and thank them for joining us today to help us determine the future of the Library Services and Construction Act. My special greetings to Dale Thompson, the Director of our fine Public Library in Providence, Rhode Island who we will be hearing from shortly. I also should add how pleased I am that Senator Kassebaum has joined our Senate Subcommittee as the Ranking Member.

The Library Services and Construction Act, which I have been proud to support throughout my service in the Senate, is the single most important source of federal funds for our public libraries. This funding has been sustained by the Congress despite Administration proposals over the last eight years to eliminate it entirely. It is my hope that the Bush Administration will join with us in reaffirming a strong federal commitment to our nation's libraries as we undertake this review and renewal of the LSCA. The Administration has just sent to the Hill a
proposal similar to the Library Improvement Act that was introduced last year. Though we have not had much time to review this, I will have some questions for our witnesses regarding this proposal.

The importance of libraries to an educated American citizenry is undeniable and I am very concerned that the libraries of this country be kept strong, viable and growing.

I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses today and thank them for providing their valuable insights on LSCA to our subcommittees.