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Library Services and Construction Act: Testimonies (1994): Report 04

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SUMMARY OF INPUT TO LSCA REAUTHORIZATION TASK FORCE
January-April 1994
(Sources include ALA Midwinter, correspondence, etc.)

This document summarizes input from throughout the library
community concerning reauthorization of the Library Services and
Construction Act, as sent to the Task Force on LSCA
Reauthorization, the ALA Washington Office, and through meetings
at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Los Angeles (includes Legislation
Committee's Information Update on February 5, ALA Ad Hoc
Subcommittee meeting on February 5, and Task Force meeting on
February 7).   This summary is arranged by issues, with reference
to written documents, resolutions, memos, and comments made at
ALA Midwinter Meeting sessions.

Technology

"...a portion of the federal money for public libraries be
allocated to the states via the state library agencies to be used
by them in support of their plans to guarantee that all residents
have access to electronic information, whether it originates
locally, nationally, or globally....that each state library
agency annually report on the increase in the numbers of
residents with convenient, affordable access to the information
highway until 100% of the residents can be said to be
'connected'."   Urban Libraries Council, January 1994 position
paper.

Technology is liberating, an empowering tool, for young
people and minorities. Technology has the potential to provide
equity of access to information. Libraries without access to the
Internet will be antiquated; use the public library as the
foundation of access. Librarians worried they can't continue to
equalize access without access to the Internet. Regional
libraries can broker Internet access to small libraries.
Training is important. NCLIS is surveying a sample of public
libraries concerning Internet access. In addition to a new LSCA,
regulatory measures could provide preferential rates; in some
places, industry is connecting libraries. Comments from
observers at 2/5/94 subcom. mtg.

Priorities include "technological infrastructure for all
types of libraries...". Concerns include: "Technology cannot
stand alone nor be the sole focus of this Act...Do not articulate
specific library roles in NII this time--develop them, based on

adopted principles (when adopted)." Association of State and Cooperative Library Agencies recommendations, 2/8/94.

Reminder to Task Force: "keep in mind that NII technology serves only as a means of providing equitable services, and not as an end unto itself." ALA Office of Library Outreach Services Advisory Committee resolution, ALA Midwinter, 2/94.

Recommendation: "to support the efforts of America's public libraries to serve as the access point for all Americans to the national information infrastructure..." Public Library Association resolution, 2/8/94.

"a renewed LSCA will support access to the National Information Infrastructure by all segments of society." Association of College and Research Libraries resolution, 2/8/94.

Recommends a Title I, Library Cooperation and Technology. Technology programs could include "promoting shared automated systems by different types of libraries at the local, area, and state level; promoting library connections to the national information infrastructure; supporting a state-level network for sharing resources among different types of libraries; demonstrating new and innovative technology for library applications." Wisc. Div. for Library Services, prelim. position paper, 3/94.

"...Task Force suggestions on electronic access to information are RIGHT ON..." Emphasized rural library access. Karen Ruddy, Chickasaw Library System, Ardmore, OK, 3/14 memo to Task Force.

Children in Poverty

"...a portion of the federal money for libraries be used to enhance services for children of all cultures who live below the federal poverty level. Local public libraries would receive (via the state library agencies) per capita aid to enhance services to eligible children who live within their service areas. Local libraries would be accountable t the state library agency for uses of the funds and must demonstrate that the funds were applied in such a manner as to enhance services available for eligible children." Urban Libraries Council, January 1994 position paper.

ULC proposal should include parent involvement in family literacy projects. Librarians from small libraries doubt the effectiveness of per capita aid when amounts are small. Getting to kids in poverty is difficult in rural areas. Concerns were also expressed about whether pass-through money might substitute for local funds. Compensatory funding is an appropriate federal role with a number of precedents. Suburban areas have pockets of

poverty also. Urban housing developments can be as isolated as rural areas. Comments from observers at 2/7/94 Task Force mtg.

Recommendation: "to enhance services for children of all cultures who live below the federal poverty level through per capita aid within library service areas." Public Library Association resolution, 2/8/94.

Children and Youth

Urge targeting children and youth through technology; without the technology, nothing else will matter. Comment from 2/5/94 Information Update attendee.

"underscore...the necessity of citing specifically in LSCA proposals services to children and youth." Association for Library Service to Children resolution, 2/7/94.

High priorities include library services for children and youth. ALA OLOS Advisory Committee, ALA Midwinter, 2/94.

Recommends a Title II, Public Library Services. Programs for children and youth could include: "enabling public libraries to be partners with other community agencies in ensuring that children and youth have access to the information and materials they need; enabling public libraries to be partners in National Education Goal efforts...; demonstrating services to children and youth; funding parent/family education projects for early childhood agencies; working in partnership with day care centers and other early childhood providers." Wisc. Div. for Library Services, prelim. position paper, 3/94.

Targeted Populations

Priorities include "library services for targeted populations...". Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies recommendations, 2/8/94.

Recommendation that the Task Force "keep as its highest priority library services for special populations, rural and urban poor, multicultural populations, children and youth." ALA Office of Library Outreach Services Advisory Committee resolution, ALA Midwinter, 2/94.

Recommends a Title II, Public Library Services. Includes the following definition of special populations: "Individuals with special needs are persons of any age (children, young adults and adults) or ethnic background *including, but not limited to American Indian, Hispanic, African-American, and Southeast Asian peoples) from among the following groups:
        -educationally disadvantaged persons;
        -economically disadvantaged persons, including those living

below the census-defined poverty level;
-functionally illiterate persons;
-persons with limited English-speaking ability;
-persons with physical and mental disabilities (including people with developmental disabilities and mentally ill persons);
-homebound persons; and
-residents of local, county, and state institutions/facilities such as jails, halfway houses, nursing homes, etc.
Wisc. Div. for Library Services, prelim. position paper, 3/94.

Interlibrary Cooperation

Priorities include "interlibrary cooperation and coordination...". "Require cooperation and partnerships among libraries rather than encourage it." ASCLA recommendations, 2/8/94.

Recommends a Title I, Library Cooperation and Technology. Cooperation programs could include "promoting cooperation among different types of libraries at the local, area, and state level." Emphasis on actual access and delivery mechanisms. Wisc. Div. for Library Services, prelim. position paper, 3/94.

Construction/Renovation

Include the ability of libraries to meet ADA requirements. Comment from 2/5/94 Information Update attendee.

Priorities include "re-equipping/renovating/remodeling libraries for technological access and ADA access...". ASCLA recommendations, 2/8/94.

Recommends a Title III, Library Capital Improvements, for projects eligible under the current LSCA II. Wisc. Div. for Library Services, prelim. position paper, 3/94.

Urban Libraries

ASCLA concern: "Do not support pass through/per capita aid programs for urban libraries without accountability." ASCLA, 2/8/94.

"The new act should not have a separate Major Urban Resource Library priority with a maintenance of effort provision. Public libraries in urban areas, however, would be eligible for funds in all titles and priority areas." Wisc. Div. of Library Services, prelim. position paper, 3/94.

Rural Libraries

Technology doesn't exist in many rural areas. Comment from 2/5/94 Information Update attendee.

Support emphasis on electronic access to information, but most deserving recipients of this access must logically be the rural communities. Libraries in these areas are "still very desperate little places." Fears Task Force is emphasizing urban areas too much. Karen Ruddy, Chickasaw Library System, Ardmore, OK, 3/14 memo to Task Force.

Public Library Development

Recommends a Title II, Public Library Services. Public library development and improvement programs could include "bringing library services to areas without such services; improving inadequate public library services and access to public library service; strengthening state library agencies; encouraging libraries to more effectively plan and evaluate library services; encouraging libraries to be involved in community economic development efforts." Wisc. Div. for Library Services, prelim. position paper, 3/94.

State Library Agency Based

ULC 1/94 position paper assumes this.

ASCLA recommends this, 2/8/94.

"...should be administered through existing state library agencies which have demonstrated their ability to lead and connect America's public libraries. PLA resolution, 2/8/94.

Wisc. Div. of Library Services recommends this, 3/94.

Measurable Results

ULC 1/94 position paper recommends this.

"...based on quantified needs, easily and economically administered and yield measurable results." PLA resolution, 2/8/94.

COSLA intends to expand proposal in area of accountability, standards, goals; state libraries are willing to build in standards and be accountable also. Comment of Barratt Wilkins, 2/5/94.

Forward Funding

Recommended by ASCLA, 2/8/94.

Recommended by Wisc. Div. for Library Services, 3/94.

Maintenance of Effort

ASCLA has various concerns, 2/8/94.

Wisc. Div. for Library Services recommends significant revisions, 3/94.

Key the Act to Federal Priorities

"articulate a vision that relates LSCA to Federal priorities." ASCLA, 2/8/94.

"nation's public libraries can be effective partners in implementing national goals in many areas." ULC 1/94 position paper.

Demonstrations

"A major value of LSCA has been to demonstrate effective library programs. This demonstration aspect of LSCA should be emphasized in the new act." Wisconsin Div. for Library Services, prelim. position paper, 3/94.

Name of Act

Don't leave libraries out of the name of the act. Comment from 2/5/94 Information Update attendee.

"The word 'library' should continue to be a part of the name of the act." Wisc. Div. for Library Services, prelim. position paper, 3/94.

Authorization Levels

"...provide a comparable level of funding for public library development and library cooperation and technology." Wisc. Div. for Library Services, prelim. position paper, 3/94.

HEA II Library Programs

Can we include HEA library programs in this process? All libraries work together; maybe we shouldn't separate them. Comment from 2/5/94 Information Update attendee.

Think creatively and include discussion of reinvented HEA II library programs in a package with a reinvented LSCA. Summary of discussion at ACRL Government Relations Committee as reported at 2/7/94 Task Force meeting.

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