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Library Services and Construction Act:

On Wednesday, May 2, the Labor and Human Resources Committee reported S.2490, the Library Services and Construction Act Amendments of 1984, to the full Senate. Senator Claiborne Pell, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities and a longtime advocate of federal support for public libraries, endorsed the legislation enthusiastically. He was especially pleased to note that the Committee vote of 17 to 1 in favor of the legislation was a clear repudiation of this Administration's repeated efforts to eliminate all federal support for public libraries. "It does not take too much thought or consideration", Pell said "to understand how very critical libraries are to our national life. The educational value of these public resources is impossible to measure and I am proud to have had a hand in renewing our federal government's commitment to them."

Major provisions of the bill:

1. Increased authorizations through FY1989

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2. Adds a new Title IV for library services to Indian tribes

3. Funding for Title II (construction) would fund construction, renovation and the conversion of historic structures into libraries. Need for public library construction is acute. Over $400 million is the investment needed today to alleviate overcrowding and bring existing facilities up to date.
4. Legislation also contained a Pell amendment which reauthorizes the National Center for Education Statistics and the National Assessments of Educational Progress. These programs provide vital information on all aspects of education and upon the progress or achievement of students in areas such as ability and comprehension in the basic skills. Unless reauthorized, these important programs will expire at the end of the current fiscal year.