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MAJOR CHANGES IN LIBRARY SERVICES AND CONSTRUCTION ACT (s.2490)

-new language in short title and findings to emphasize the need for expanding the role of libraries as information centers for their communities, utilizing improved and new technologies

-increased authorizations funding for Title II (construction)

-forward funding

-1% off the top for grants to Indian tribes

-language included under STATE LIBRARY SERVICE PROGRAM (sec.103 of the Act) that asks states to describe programs for the elderly

-federal share for construction reduced to 1/3

-if a library facility constructed in part with monies under this act, ceases to be used as a library before 20 years have passed, the federal government is entitled to recover an amount which bears the same ratio to the value of the facility at that time as the amount of the Federal grant bore to the cost of such facility (or part thereof).

-guidelines for the States long-range program for the sharing of library resources

-repeal Title IV, services for older readers

-add new Title IV Library Services for Indian Tribes -

-grants to Indian tribes living on or near reservations that have submitted an approved application

-equal allotment to each tribe that applies

-remaining funds granted on the basis of reallocation to those tribes submitting further application

-funds used for materials, inservice and preservice for library personnel, special programs, construction and remodeling, transportation, dissemination, and assessment of tribal needs

-providing access to SCORPIO for the National Commission on Libraries

AMENDMENTS AT SUBCOMMITTEE MARK-UP:

- States must describe in their application for funds what services they are providing for handicapped individuals (Weicker)

- Section 14 dealing with SCORPIO was struck (Stafford)

- Modifies Section 10 language to allow states flexibility in developing services for the elderly
Statement by Senator Pell on H.R. 2878

Mr. President, as one of the original sponsors of the Senate legislation to amend and extend the Library Services and Construction Act, I am very pleased to see a final proposal come before us today that has the agreement of House and Senate conferees. H.R. 2878 has my strongest support and I am pleased to speak on behalf of its passage today.

Before doing so, however, I would like to recognize the fine substantive work done by Senator Stafford, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities, in developing this bill and in forging a consensus on it. I want to particularly thank Susan Franson and Ellin Congleton of his staff for their day-to-day role in developing what I believe to be a solid reauthorized Library Services and Construction Act.

This Act, which I have been proud to support throughout four Senate terms, is the single most important source of federal assistance for our nation's libraries. It provides this support to the states by a system of formula grants which have been targeted toward particularly needy areas. These areas have traditionally included under-served groups such as the handicapped, the disadvantaged and those people who speak English as a second language.

As more and more of these targeted populations have been reached with library services, the LSCA has been broadened to include support for urban libraries, construction of library buildings, interlibrary cooperation and resource sharing. The federal share represents only a modest portion of the total expenditure on all of these essential library programs but it becomes evermore important that we continue the federal role because local jurisdictions alone
cannot finance programs that will adequately meet the demands placed on our libraries.

Major urban libraries can now benefit in very useful and productive ways from LSCA funds. Inflation has hit these urban institutions particularly hard and has caused open hours to be cut back as well as curtailed the purchase of new books and materials. Municipalities have also been forced to reduce library services as residents have moved to the suburbs taking their tax dollars with them.

I am pleased that this measure authorizes funds for the construction and renovation of library buildings. The funds appropriated in 1983 as part of the Emergency Jobs Bill were a helpful beginning in this regard but only a fraction of the potential projects could be carried out. It would take close to $400 million to adequately address the problems of overcrowding and deteriorating facilities, but the monies authorized here will certainly be an important step in the right direction.

H.R. 2878 is legislation that renews our government's commitment to a healthy, vital and accessible public library system in the United States. Libraries have correctly been described as our most important education resource - second only to the classroom. For this reason alone this bill deserves our support. I urge my colleagues to join with Senator Stafford and myself in approving the Library Services and Construction Act Amendments of 1984.