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## Institute of Museum and Library Services Act (1996): Correspondence 02

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September 16, 1996

To: Senator  
Fr: DE and PW  
Re: Institute of Museum and Library Services

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As you know, we came up with the idea several months ago of merging library programs into an expanded Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). We did this because the library programs at the Department of Education have traditionally had very little support -- regardless of the administration in office.. Giving them agency status as part of an expanded Institute of Museum **and** Library Services (IMLS) would increase their visibility and would hopefully strengthen support for them. Also, there are many cooperative programs between libraries and museums, so the idea of a merger made sense.

Both Senator Jeffords and Senator Simon have embraced the idea of an Institute of Museum **and** Library Service from the point we unveiled the idea. It also has very strong support from the entire library community, and from Diane Frankel, the current IMS Director.

As you will recall, when we considered the Workforce Development bill on the floor last year, we added the provisions to establish IMLS as a floor amendment. In Conference with the House, we were able to work out the differences, and reach an agreement strongly supported by both House Republicans and House Democrats.

Unfortunately, since it appears that the conference agreement on the workforce development bill will be going nowhere, there is a desire to take parts of that legislation and move them on their own. One of those parts is the legislation for the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

If we move a separate bill to privatize Sallie Mae and Connie Lee, Senator Jeffords has already agreed to include the IMLS provisions in that bill. This is excellent, and is certainly something we should be insisting upon.

It is very important, however, that you talk with Senator Kennedy so that he knows how important this proposal is to you. His staff has not been overly enthusiastic because of concern over how it might affect NEA and NEH reauthorization, despite the fact that officials at both NEA and NEH do not have similar concerns. We feel sure that Senator Kennedy will support the IMLS proposal if he knows how important it is to you. Also, we understand that both Senators Jeffords and Simon will also talk with Kennedy to voice their support for this proposal.

Given your years of work on behalf of both libraries and museums, achieving this newly expanded Institute of Museum **and** Library Services would be an important Pell accomplishment for the end of this session.

Statement of Senator Claiborne Pell (D,RI)  
on the Conference Report on  
The Workforce and Career Development Act

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Mr. President, for the better part of the past two years, I have urged the enactment of S. 143, the Workforce Development Act. I supported this legislation in Committee and on the Senate floor. In fact, I was the only Democrat in the Labor Committee to vote in favor of it. I did so because I thought it contained a much-needed overhaul and consolidation of our job training programs. I was also pleased that it contained some good, strong education provisions.

Unfortunately, I cannot say the same of the Conference Report that is before us. Each of us knows that a conference between the House and Senate involves give and take on both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol. In the conference deliberations on this bill, however, the give and take became excessively partisan, and some very important provisions were lost.

In education, the area with which I was most concerned, the Senate also gave up a series of very crucial provisions. The result is a severely weakened piece of legislation.

The School to Work program originally proposed by President Clinton would be repealed. This is a highly successful and popular program not only in my home State of Rhode Island but throughout our entire nation. It links academic and vocational education to the needs of the workplace. It should not be repealed. Quite to the contrary, it should be expanded. To give the states

permissive authority to allocate funds for school to work activities is not sufficient. We should have left the current law on the books. We should have let the program continue to do its good work.

The requirement in the Senate bill that vocational education and training funds would continue to go to correctional institutions is no longer a part of this bill. This is not a program that focuses only upon hardened criminals. Very often, it helps troubled youth who are in detention programs or reformatories. It provides those young people the education and training they need to straighten out their lives and become productive, law-abiding citizens. It is a program that should be continued and not curtailed.

A well-targeted within state vocational education formula has also been weakened. The original Senate bill provided that funds be based 70% upon Title I, 20% upon a count of special education children, and 10% on school age population. Unfortunately, the count of special education children was dropped in conference. The 20% went entirely to population and none to Title I. In Rhode Island, this will mean less funds will flow to Providence and Central Falls, cities where the need is the greatest and the resources are lacking.

The formula in current law and the one in the original Senate bill should not be weakened. If anything, it should have been strengthened. We pushed hard in conference to target part of the special education money to Title I and part to population. Unfortunately, that effort was defeated on a party line vote.

The original Senate provision that allocation of funds for area vocational schools should first serve those area schools where need is the greatest was also dropped. Removal of this provision means less targeting of scarce funds, which, to my mind, is most unfortunate.

When the Senate bill went to conference, I was very hopeful that we would be able to work out our differences in an amicable and bipartisan fashion. I was also hopeful that we would produce a conference agreement that might even improve upon the Senate bill. I did not envision a weakening of the Senate provisions, and I certainly did not anticipate the loss of bipartisanship that has traditionally been the hallmark of our efforts in this important area.

Mr. President, if we set our minds to it, we can do better than this bill. We can bring true reform to our job training programs, and we can strengthen our adult and vocational education programs. However, even though I will not be here, I believe it will take a new Congress to accomplish this objective, and particularly to restore the spirit and act of bipartisanship that has traditionally been the hallmark of education and training legislation. It is with very real regret, therefore, that I shall oppose this Conference Report and urge my colleagues to do likewise.