Speech 14

Carol C. Henderson
Statement of Carol C. Henderson
Executive Director Designate
American Library Association
Washington Office

Before the
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations

On
Library Programs in the FY 1995
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education
Appropriations Bill

10:00 a.m., February 3, 1994
Mr. Chairman, it gives me the greatest pleasure to appear before you to testify for FY95 Appropriations for Library Programs. I am Carol Henderson, Executive Director Designate of the American Library Association’s Washington Office. The American Library Association is a nonprofit educational organization of 57,000 librarians, library trustees, and friends of libraries dedicated to the development and improvement of library and information service for all the American people.

Although we are testifying before President Clinton's budget for FY95 is released, we are well aware of the tight budgetary constraints that affect the President and the appropriators. We come before you with only the past for guidance and, historically, this subcommittee has listened to and acted upon our requests.

The Administration has stated a clear, admirable, and necessary goal that by the year 2000, all schools, libraries, and hospitals should be connected to the National Information Infrastructure. President Clinton stated this goal in his State of the Union speech. Vice President Gore called for this in major speeches in December and January. The goal is repeated in the Administration's white paper on its telecommunications proposal.

What happens when libraries are connected to this information superhighway? Do their resources become magically available to schoolchildren across the nation? Do the unique resources on Kentucky history in the libraries of your state automatically appear on the computer screen of the historian in Pennsylvania? Not without a lot of time, effort, and resource deployment on the part of the libraries.

The HEA and LSCA library programs you have supported over the years have linked libraries electronically. Hundreds of library online catalogs are now searchable through the Internet. A survey we conducted last spring showed that 25 states are already using LSCA funds for Internet connections and training for public libraries. And HEA library programs are ready to be used to make the content of library collections available electronically.

The result is that library resources are tapped more than ever by users outside the local tax base or beyond the campus—a boon to learning and scholarship, but hard to sell to local funders. The federal stimulus for these activities is critical.

THE FEDERAL ROLE IN SUPPORT OF LIBRARIES

The federal role, as administered by the Department of Education, is concentrated on three critically important and appropriate national goals:

(1) To extend outreach to those for whom library service requires extra effort or special materials (examples are recent immigrant groups, those with disabilities);
(2) To utilize new technologies to identify, preserve, and
share library and information resources across institutional, local, and state boundaries; and
(3) To support education, research, and demonstrations in the library and information science field.

The federal role is focused in areas that require incentive funding for activities libraries have difficulty initiating independently, that involve coordinated interstate efforts, or that benefit from national leadership.

Troubled Funding History: For 12 years under previous Administrations, Congress ignored requests to zero out libraries, and consistently funded, renewed, and updated these programs. The Clinton Administration recommended $114,749,000 for FY94, partially reversing course, but proposed to eliminate all but two library programs. Congress fully restored funding for a Total FY94 Appropriation of $146,309,000.

Deficit Reduction: Libraries are a bare blip on the chart, but they have taken more than their share of cuts. HEA library programs have been cut again and again, and are not yet back to their peak funding of $19 million under the Carter Administration. LSCA was funded at $120.5 million in FY83; 11 years later, the total is only 6.9 percent higher--a significant cut in buying power.

Recommendation: The FY95 budget for libraries should be at least $150 million to enable libraries to do their part in the Administration's National Information Infrastructure agenda and in its Goals 2000 agenda. Libraries are rising to the Clinton/Gore challenge.

CURRENTLY FUNDED HEA AND LSCA LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Higher Education Act Title II, Academic Libraries and Information Services. Amended and reauthorized in 1992 to reflect the increasingly electronic networked environment in which libraries operate on behalf of all users. Overall Critical Contribution: Stimulates projects which increase access to library and information resources by those not connected with the campus or research institution. FY94 Total: $17,443,000 (Administration requested 0).

HEA II-A, College Library Technology and Cooperation Grants. Purpose: To assist academic libraries to acquire technological equipment needed to participate in resource sharing networks; for joint-use library projects; for demonstration projects in utilizing technology. Why Support? Helps these libraries put their resources on electronic networks for access beyond their own campuses. FY94: $3,873,000 (Administration requested 0).
HEA II-B, Library Education and Human Resource Development.

**Purpose:** Doctoral and master's level fellowships and training institutes; emphasis on technology and electronic networking, minority recruitment, other areas of shortages or needs.

**Why Support?** Recruits many of library field's leaders, especially in post-graduate education, many of its minority members, and many of its information technology specialists.

**FY94:** $4,960,000 (Administration requested 0).

HEA II-B, Research and Demonstrations.

**Purpose:** Only federal program devoted to research in library science.

**Why Support?** Library science researchers can increase ease-of-use of electronic information resources and networks, but only if they can bring research funds to the table.

**FY94:** $2,802,000 (Administration requested 0).

HEA II-C, Improving Access to Research Library Resources.

**Purpose:** To make unique research library resources widely available beyond each library's primary clientele; develop new methods to provide enhanced access to information resources.

**Why Support?** Increases scholars' and other researchers' electronic access to distant research materials and databases.

**FY94:** $5,808,000 (Administration requested 0).

**Recommendation:** Appropriate a total of $20 million for HEA II. Direct the Department of Education to focus priorities for these programs on projects related to the National Information Infrastructure. Congress set such expectations in reauthorization legislation report language. If the Department would move more aggressively in this direction, the library field would eagerly respond, with positive results for learning.

Library Services and Construction Act. Due for reauthorization in 1994. **Overall Critical Contribution:** Encourages outreach to those for whom library service requires extra effort or special materials, such as recent immigrant groups, those with disabilities. Stimulates use of technology to share library and information resources across institutional, local, and state boundaries. **FY94 Total:** $128,866,000 (Administration requested $114,749,000).

LSCA I, Public Library Services.

**Purpose:** State allotments for services and subgrants to improve public library services. Priorities include making effective use of technology, various outreach services to diverse constituencies.

**Why Support?** Public libraries have practically no other source of support for innovation in technology and services.

**FY94:** $83,227,000 (Administration requested $95,000,000).
LSCA II, Public Library Construction and Technology Enhancement.
Purpose: State allotments for renovation, construction, technological upgrading of public library facilities.
Why Support? Used extensively to accommodate new technologies and to meet requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act.
FY94: $17,792,000 (Administration requested 0).

LSCA III, Interlibrary Cooperation and Resource Sharing.
Purpose: State allotments for coordination of resources of public, school, academic, and special libraries; development of technological capacity of libraries to participate in cooperative networking.
Why Support? Twenty-five states are already using LSCA funds for Internet connectivity and training for libraries.
FY94: $19,749,000 (Administration recommended same).

LSCA IV, Library Services for Indian Tribes and Hawaiian Natives.
Two percent of appropriations for LSCA I, II, and III automatically set aside for promoting needed special efforts to provide Indian tribes and Hawaiian natives with library service.

LSCA VI, Library Literacy Programs.
Purpose: Direct competitive grants to state and local public libraries for literacy programs.
Why Support? A literacy student who makes regular use of the public library is likely to complete the course, keep reading, and know where to go to find needed information.
FY94: $8,098,000 (Administration requested 0).

Recommendation: Appropriate a total of $130 million for LSCA.

ALA also supports adequate funding for the Chapter 2 school block grant (including school library resources as an eligible use of funds), the National Center for Education Statistics (including library surveys), the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, and the National Library of Medicine.

ALA appreciates the opportunity to appear before the Subcommittee on behalf of programs to improve library and information services for the American people.

Attachment
Administration Requests and Congressional Appropriations for Higher Education Act Title II Library Programs and the Library Services and Construction Act Fiscal Years 1978-1994
(amounts in thousands)

<table>
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1 HEA II-B included in a proposed consolidation of seven graduate fellowship programs.
2 Admin. proposed $76 million Library Improvement Act to replace LSCA and HEA II.