

1985

White House Conference on Library and Information Services: Early Stages (1979-1985): Correspondence 11

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to: Sandy Cray

from: THE OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

MARY ALICE HEDGE RESZETAR



6 Dec 1985

Dear Sandy,

Here 'tis. I'd like to meet with you after you've had a chance to read the report of the White House Conference Preliminary Design Group.

NCLIS endorsed the report earlier this week.

Our Chairman will be sending Senator Pell a copy. Some of our Commissioners are going to be contacting key Senate members asking them to cosponsor. Senator Hatch has been "promised" - we'll see.

Give me a call when you've read it. I'd like your impressions. Take care. Mary Alice

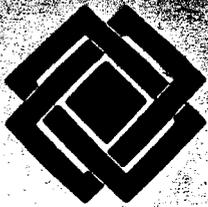
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, SUITE 3122

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P.S. I'm also enclosing a press release.



National Commission
on Libraries
and Information Science

NEWS RELEASE

Suite 3122 GSA ROB #3 7th & D Streets, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20024 202-382-0840

December 4, 1985
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:
Dorothy Pollet Gray
(202) 382-0840

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE PROPOSED TO IMPROVE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO MEET CHANGING NEEDS

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Recognizing the role libraries and information services play in combatting illiteracy, in assisting the disadvantaged and in improving the growth and stability of the American economy, at its quarterly meeting this week the United States National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) approved a preliminary design for a 1989 White House Conference on Library and Information Services.

"By anticipating and responding to the growing demand for information in an information society, it is the goal of this conference to increase literacy, productivity and an understanding of the democratic process in America through better utilization of our libraries and information services," said Elinor M. Hashim, NCLIS chairman from Columbus, Ohio.

The first White House Conference on Library and Information Services, held in 1979, was the culmination of 57 state, territorial and theme conferences and other meetings that involved more than 100,000 persons in grass roots discussion of critical issues affecting library and information services.

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Since 1980 the Commission has continued to work to implement the recommendations and has worked closely with the White House Conference on Library and Information Services Taskforce (WHCLIST) which has documented increases in state appropriations for library and information services, the formation of many statewide Friends of Libraries organizations, expanded continuing education opportunities and many other significant changes.

At the meeting the commissioners accepted the White House Conference Preliminary Design Group (WHCPDG) proposal for the second conference and will present it to the Administration and Congress in support of resolutions introduced by Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI) and Representative William Ford (D-MI).

These resolutions call for grass roots involvement in the 1989 conference by the American public, including library users, civic leaders, lawmakers, librarians and others in identifying unmet library service needs, examining library and information service issues and developing recommendations for future library and information services.

Endorsed by the American Library Association (ALA), the American Society for Information Science (ASIS), the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) and others, the 1989 White House conference would consider how libraries can increase literacy by promoting the recognition that the ability to find and use information is a fundamental skill in today's society.

Another goal of the conference, as outlined in the WHCPDG proposal, is to promote human resource development in order to increase productivity in American business. The proposal suggests that as the workforce changes to reflect the increased use of elderly and disadvantaged workers, as more businesses become international and as most workers today will be required to master five different jobs in the course of their working life, libraries play an increasingly important role in retraining, research and job information counseling.

The third goal for the White House Conference will be to use library and information services to promote democracy. NCLIS commissioners agreed that libraries need to serve as information centers for all citizens and government officials because a democratic society depends upon the informed participation of its people and leaders.

The commissioners also considered the recommendations that followed from the April 1985 NCLIS report on the role of fees in supporting library and information services in public and academic libraries. The fee study, distributed widely to the library and information science community, concluded that there is little data available about who is charging fees and even less about the effect of fees on access to information. NCLIS enthusiastically agreed therefore to accept the offer from the American Library Association (ALA) and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) to assist in gathering needed data. The three groups will meet January 1986.

NCLIS
add 3

The NCLIS commissioners also discussed the issue of censorship in public and school libraries. At the request of Congress, NCLIS is preparing a study and report on the extent of censorship in American libraries and how society is responding to such censorship.

The United States National Commission on Libraries and Information Science was chartered by Congress in 1970 to ensure the library and information needs of the people of the United States. NCLIS cooperates with state and local governments and local, private and public agencies to achieve effective use of the nation's information resources. NCLIS commissioners are appointed by the President for five year terms.

NCLIS, a permanent independent agency of the federal government, advises the President and Congress on national library and information policies and plans, including those dealing with the needs of special groups, such as the elderly, cultural minorities and rural residents.

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Photos of NCLIS Chairman Hashim available

Contact: Dorothy Pollet Gray, (202) 382-0840