

Congress is in pause mode and has again decided to punt on the FY98 budget by passing a three-week "continuing resolution" scheduled to end about October 22. Thirteen of the 16 major appropriations bills were not passed by the October 1 deadline to begin this fiscal year. This also means that no work is being conducted on other legislation, including reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. It has been a time for the library community to work on intellectual property and access to government information proposals.

Government information policy

To coordinate the library community's activities during the 105th Congress the Inter-Association Working Group (IAWG) on Government Information Policy has continued to meet on a monthly basis since it was established in January 1997 by then-ALA president Mary Somerville. (The six other library association members are the American Association of Law Libraries, Association of Research Libraries, Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, Medical Library Association, Special Libraries Association, and the Urban Libraries Council.)

Lee Marie Wisel from Columbia Union College in Takoma Park, Maryland, has represented ACRL in these meetings. Francis Buckley, director of Shaker Heights (Ohio) Public Library, chairs IAWG. After identifying areas where the current law needs to be revised, developing models for access and dissemination of government information, and analyzing the pro's and con's of each model, IAWG has now developed a draft legislative proposal, "The Federal Information Access Act of 1997." It addresses how to broaden the scope of information available to the public and how to revise the definitions in the law to include electronic government information. IAWG has also been concerned about how to maintain a centrally coordinated program for library and pub-



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lic access to government information under the Superintendent of Documents.

IAWG representatives testified before two congressional committees regarding Title 44 reform and met with numerous government representatives throughout this process, including staff from the Joint Committee on Printing, the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, the House Committee on House Oversight, the Government Printing Office, the Office of Management and Budget, and the administrative Office of the Courts. In addition, IAWG has shared its legislative proposal and discussed these issues with other interested groups.

Additional information about IAWG, including a roster of members, summaries of meetings, and the IAWG draft legislative proposal, is available at the IAWG Web site: <http://library.berkeley.edu/GODORT/iawgpage.html>.

For further information, contact Francis Buckley, IAWG chair, at (216) 991-2030; francis.buckley@shpl.lib.oh.us. Lee Marie Wisel can be reached at (301) 891-4222, or via e-mail: lwisel@cuc.edu. (And thanks to Dan O'Mahony for contributing to this report.)

Intellectual property

Adam Eisgrau, ALA Washington Office legislative counsel, reports that progress continues on efforts on a bill sponsored by Senator John Ashcroft (R-Missouri), S. 1146, the Digital Copyright Clarification and Technology Act of 1997, which attempts to maintain the balance of fair use in the digital environment. Academic library advocates are asked to contact their senators about supporting S. 1146, and should also encourage their respective colleges and universities to support this legislation, which is strongly supported by ALA and its allies in the Digital Futures Coalition (DFC). For further information, contact Adam Eisgrau at 1-800-941-8478 or via e-mail at ame@alawash.org. The DFC Web site has current information on S. 1146 and other pending copyright legislation at: <http://www.ari.net/dfc>. ■