

# Washington Hotline



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**HEA.** The Senate Education, Arts, and Humanities Subcommittee concluded its hearings on reauthorization of the Higher Education Act with a May 23 hearing on “non-student aid” issues, covering several HEA titles including library programs. Merrily Taylor, Brown University Librarian from Chairman Claiborne Pell’s home state of Rhode Island, testified on behalf of ALA and the Association of Research Libraries. Her testimony covered the full range of ALA and ARL recommendations on HEA (see the Washington Hotline column in the June 1991 *C&RL News*).

Taylor also supported a bill (S. 1099) introduced on May 17 by Sen. Paul Sarbanes (D-MD) to reauthorize HEA II-B at the increased amounts recommended by ALA. In introducing S. 1099, Sarbanes cited that “the growing shortage of librarians and library educators is of special concern in an increasingly information-based society” and that “assistance with the cost of the advanced education required for librarianship would help to alleviate such shortages.”

**NREN.** Three versions of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991, which would create a National Research and Education Network, are out of committee and technically ready for floor action. The Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee issued on May 16 its report (S. Rept. 102-57) on S. 272, which the committee had approved on March 19. On May 9, the Energy and Natural Resources Committee ordered reported a revised version of its NREN bill, S. 343 (S. Rept. 102-64). How these two bills will be melded is still a question, which apparently must be settled before a floor vote.

In the House, HR 656 was ordered reported in revised form by the Science, Space, and Technology Committee on May 8, and the committee report (H. Rept. 102-66, Part I) was issued on May 15. Revisions at the full committee level were generally the result of negotiations with the Administration, which was concerned about coordinating the high-performance computing program and maintaining flexibility in agency roles. The House bill removed most specific agency roles and put the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy in charge of coordination, but kept the National Science Foundation as the lead agency to manage the NREN. HR 656 was referred to the Education and Labor Committee, which restored a role for the Department of Education, and issued its report (H. Rept. 102-66, Part II). Both S. 272 and HR 656 include very helpful language relating to education and libraries in their committee reports.

**Copyright.** Revised legislation relating to the fair use of unpublished materials was introduced on May 9 by Sen. Paul Simon (D-IL) and on May 16 by Reps. William Hughes (D-NJ) and Carlos Moorhead (R-CA). The bills, S. 1035 and HR 2372, represent a compromise between authors’ organizations and the computer industry. Recent decisions of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, which has jurisdiction over many of the major publishing

houses, made it legally difficult to quote even limited amounts of unpublished materials without obtaining authorization.

Authors and publishers pushed for legislation in the last Congress to clarify that the fair-use doctrine embodied in the Copyright Act applied to unpublished as well as published works. However, computer industry representatives were concerned that such a clarification could lead to piracy of computer software since source codes could be technically unpublished but copyrighted material. Action on last year's bills was postponed. The new bills are not intended to broaden the fair use of unpublished computer software, but are intended to make clear that the unpublished nature of a work should not create a virtual *per se* bar to its use.

**PRA.** Two bills to reauthorize the Paperwork Reduction Act were introduced recently in the Senate. Sen. John Glenn (D-OH) on May 14 introduced S. 1044, the Federal Information Resources Management Act. This bill reflects the compromise reached by the Senate, House, and the Administration at the end of the last Congress. Sen. Sam Nunn (D-GA) introduced S. 1139, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1991, on May 22 with a number of cosponsors, and with strong support from the small business community. Both bills include versions of a list of restrictive factors required to be considered by an agency as it disseminates or shares public information. The factors include requiring consideration of equivalent public or private information products or services, which denigrates the role of the government agency and elevates the role of the private sector at the expense of the public. ALA has objected to such provisions in PRA reauthorization bills in the last Congress.

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## Still feeling funny

Since March 1988 I have had the opportunity to write 10 "Humor and creativity" columns for *C&RL News*. In those columns I have attempted to stress the importance of humor as "an ideal way to foster an atmosphere in which creativity and innovation, and even risk-taking, may stand a chance of emerging, surviving, and perhaps flourishing." I have also been able to showcase, thanks to numerous contributions from many librarians across the United States, a sample of the best of our contemporary library humor. Now it is time for me, and *C&RL News* under a new editor, to move on. "Humor and creativity," at least as a semi-regular feature under my byline, has come to an end.

My personal interest in library humor has by no means diminished. I still welcome any and all contributions as I continue to build the Library Humor Archives here at The Molesworth Institute. This spring I will be publishing the first issue of *Vox Libris* as a generic library newsletter designed to, once again, promote a wry view of academic libraries. Other issues, each under a different title so that I might readily win the snake-in-the-grass award for the worst serial title change engineered by a librarian, are likely to follow from time to time. New contributions will provide fodder for that illustrious journal.

Contributions can, as before, be sent to me by regular mail at 143 Hanks Mill Road, Storrs, CT 06268; by fax at (203) 486-3593; or by electronic mail via either ALANET at ala1625 or Bitnet at

hbladm3@uconnvm. For the foolhardy, copies of *Vox Libris* are available for only \$3.00 postpaid.—  
*Norman D. Stevens, Director, The Molesworth Institute*

*Ed. note:* Norman Stevens's contributions to *C&RL News* are very much appreciated and we hope he will occasionally offer us a humorous update. Watch the September issue for a serious commentary from Stevens. ■ ■

### Unusual library-use assignments needed

Wanted: Unique or unusual library-use assignments from librarian/teacher teams. Thomas Kirk (Berea College) and Kris Huber (St. Olaf College) are editing a column on "Term Paper Alternatives" in *Research Strategies*, the library instruction journal. They need tested library-based assignments that meet the mutual goals of disciplinary study and significant library use, but that take a nontraditional approach or result in a nontraditional product. Share your innovative ideas with the profession! Send inquiries to Thomas Kirk, Hutchins Library, Berea College, Berea, NY 40404 or Kris Huber, Rolvaag Library, St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN 55057-1097.