

House appropriators announce library funding levels

The House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over several library programs, recommended funding levels for fiscal year 2006 on June 9.

The subcommittee's recommendation included an overall funding level of \$249,640,000 for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Within that total, the subcommittee recommended that the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) receive \$212,650,000, an increase of \$6,699,000 over last year, but \$8,675 below President Bush's budget request. Within that total is \$165.5 million for Grants to State Library Agencies, \$24 million for Librarians for the 21st Century program, \$12.5 million for National Leadership Grants for libraries, and \$3.5 million for Improving Library Service to Native Americans.

For school libraries, the House proposes \$19,683,264 for the Improving Literacy Through School Libraries program, the same level as the President's request and fiscal year 2005.

Similar to the President's budget request, many education programs are level funded, some are cut and several programs are eliminated entirely, including the Community Technology Centers.

However, some of the programs that the President proposed for elimination in his FY 06 budget were partially restored, like the Even Start family literacy program, which was funded at \$200 million. Also, adult education and Title V funding, which were severely cut, were restored to their FY05 level of \$585.4 million and \$198.4 million respectively.

ALA, along with 117 Members of Congress, had requested that the House and Senate Appropriations Committees fund LSTA at President Bush's request of \$221.33 million and \$100 million for the Improving Literacy

Through School Libraries program—the level of funding necessary to initiate formula grants to all states.

While ALA is pleased with the almost \$7 million increase proposed for LSTA, we will continue to work with the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to increase funding for America's school libraries.

National Library Legislative Day 2005 a success!

The legislative day events provide an important opportunity for each participant to educate Senators and Representatives about all the terrific programs at your library and on issues that are important to the larger library community. Your Congressional representatives want to know how libraries and library programs impact the lives of their constituents; your participation in this important event ensures that they do.

FOLUSA gave its annual public service award this year to Representative Ralph Regula (R-16th OH), who was honored for his support of libraries at the Congressional Reception. Also, Representative Bernie Sanders (I-VT) spoke at the reception about the importance of safeguarding privacy rights from the provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act that encroach on civil liberties.

You can view copies of the issue summaries from the legislative briefing day on the ALA Washington Office Web site at www.ala.org/ala/washoff/washevents/nlld/nationallibrary.htm. Mark your calendars for next year's National Library Legislative Day, May 1–2, 2006.

Did you participate in Virtual Library Legislative Day?

If you organized a virtual library legislative day in your state, please let us know so that we can recognize your efforts to support libraries. Please e-mail Erin Haggerty at ehaggerty@alawash.org, and include your name and contact information, your state, and the number of participants in your group. *zz*

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