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REPORT FROM COLORADO REPRESENTATIVE

To the Mountain Plains Library Association

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Legislative Update: State Grants for Libraries, Round 2! -- Passed the Senate! On to the House and the Governor!

Legislation was reintroduced by Colorado State Senator Ginette "Gigi" Dennis in January 2000 to provide \$2 million in state grants to assist Colorado's publicly supported school, academic and public libraries to purchase additional educational materials they would otherwise be unable to afford. The grants are based on the population served, but the minimum grant is \$3,000, which will be especially beneficial to libraries in rural areas. \$3,000 is more than double the size of many small libraries' book budgets.

Senate Bill 085 has passed the Senate Education and Appropriations committees and the full Senate on April 5, with the full \$2 million appropriation. Amendments will be introduced during the House Education Committee hearing, which will be the next step in the process.

The unofficial version with its proposed amendments can be found on the Colorado Library Association web page ([http://www.cla-web.org/sf\\_bill.htm](http://www.cla-web.org/sf_bill.htm)). The amendments have been agreed upon between the Governor's office and the CLA Legislative Committee. The bill carries basically the same funding provisions as the bill that Senator Dennis sponsored last year (which was passed by the Legislature but vetoed by the Governor) but SB-085 now contains language addressing Internet access to materials often considered inappropriate for minors. It offers three options:

1. "Equip each computer with software that will limit the ability of minors to gain access to material that is obscene or illegal; OR
2. "Purchase Internet connectivity from an Internet Service Provider that provides filter services to limit the computer access of minors to material that is obscene or illegal; OR
3. "Develop and implement a policy, adopted by the board of education or governing body of such library, as applicable, that establishes measures to restrict minors from obtaining computer information that is obscene or illegal."

This language resulted from discussions between the governor's office, the bill sponsors, and CLA representatives -- as well as from a review of similar legislation from other states. The language closely models that used in 1999 Arizona legislation. The "or" connectives are particularly important, in that they offer libraries some flexibility in dealing with this extremely thorny issue, and still satisfy the Governor's intent.

In addition, the full \$ 70,000 requested to fund ACLIN (Access Colorado Library Information Network) was funded and a 2.95% increase (\$ 59,000) for the CRC (Colorado Resource Center) which enables Denver Public Library to provide library services to Colorado residents living

outside of Denver. ACLIN plans to upgrade its technology and resources with the additional funding. Unfortunately, there was no increase funded for the state's regional library service system offices.

Taken from CLA News, February 2000, and recent announcements on "LIBNET" from Gail Dow, Chair, CLA Legislative Committee.

#### Spring Workshops

"Reach Out..." CLA Public Library Division, May 19, 2000, Boulder Public Library. Sample concurrent sessions: "Overcoming Culture and Language Barriers," "Information Literacy Tutorials Online," "Up Against Oprah: Connecting Readers with the Rest of the Collection."

"Navigating Digital Waters -- Chart Your Course!" Technical Services and Automation Division and College and University Division, May 25, 2000, Auraria Campus, Denver. Keynote by John Ober, Director, California Digital Library. Concurrent speakers on SPARC (serials), CORC, and Amazon.com.

#### Fall Conference

"Enhancing Information: Libraries Add Value," September 14-17, 2000, Snowmass, CO. Conference Program Submission form (online) due May 2, 2000.

CLA Website: <http://www.cla-web.org>