

ATTACHMENT #3

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The ILL process seems to be in shambles. While the costs continue to rise, the reimbursements have disappeared. As a result, we are changing our rules to include fees on patrons. State aid should continue to provide this essential service. If there is truly a contribution toward the bottom line expenses, such as the OCLO costs, that would help, but this is certainly not assured.

I do not believe that courier service is the (very expensive) answer in a largely rural state. We already have an efficient ILL delivery system called the USPO. We need postage reimbursement at the very least.

I realize you will largely discount my comments and this is why I have not provided more input.

ATTACHMENT #4

Bill Cochran
Director
Parmly Billings Library

I will not be able to attend the hearing to be held at the State Library on Thursday regarding proposed amendments to ARM 10.102.4001, but instead am sending these comments in support of the amendments.

The current State interlibrary loan (ILL) reimbursement program allocates funding to each eligible library proportionately by dividing the total allocated funding for the program by the number of total interlibrary loans and reimbursing each loan at the resulting rate. I understand that the amended rule would continue to allocate half of the funding as described above, but half would be allocated to net lenders, i.e. eligible libraries which loan more items to other eligible libraries than they borrow from them, in proportion to the share of total net loans that each makes.

In a 2001 report on the State's ILL reimbursement program to the Networking Task Force, on which I was serving, former State Librarian Karen Strege recommended development of a new approach to interlibrary loan that would, among other goals, recognize that "the ILL burden falls on libraries in Montana that have specialized or more resources," and that "a method to do so, quite simply, is follow the lead of other states by recognizing that all loans are worthy of an equal subsidy, but that loans above the number which a library borrows represents an 'extra' service by the local library" and these net loans should be reimbursed by an additional subsidy. Her report cites a number of states in which ILL reimbursement is provided only to net lenders, sometimes requiring that a minimum number of net loans be made before the reimbursement program even applies.

A brief summary of our experience at Parmly Billings Library may help explain why I believe that such a change in the ILL reimbursement program would be an improvement over the current program. When I arrived in Billings in FY91, the Library lent almost 4,000 items to other Montana libraries, while borrowing only 500, for a net lending ratio of 8:1. By FY97, our in-state ILL lending had doubled to over 8,000 loans, or a third of all public library ILL loans in the state and more than any other library of any type in the state, while we were borrowing only 1,800 items, for a net lending ratio of 5:1. The current equal subsidy reimbursement program does not cover our costs for providing net loans, so we were allocating large and increasing amounts of staff time to lending to other libraries, at the expense of serving our own patrons, without compensating benefit to our community in the form of items borrowed by ILL.

When we analyzed the state FY97 ILL statistics, we realized that we were in a crisis and needed to take steps to manage the exploding workload. Although we had been the first public library in the state to participate in automated online ILL, we discontinued that participation in 1999 and began to accept only mail requests. Even so, we continued to be the largest public library ILL

lender in the state until FY01, when Flathead County Library loaned more ILL items than us and others have joined them since. From the peak of 8,000 items in FY97, we have dropped to about 800 loans in FY05, but remain a 2:1 net lender with only about 400 items borrowed. At our current low levels of ILL lending and borrowing, we are certainly able to manage the workload, but only at the expense of offering other Montana libraries inconvenient mail access to our collection, at almost 300,000 items the largest of any public library in the state, to achieve that manageable workload.

The proposed change to the State ILL reimbursement program would recognize that net lenders like Parmly Billings Library have additional costs that are not offset by the borrowing they do. This would be an important improvement in Montana's resource sharing system and would give us reason to reevaluate the steps we have had to take to manage those costs under the current program.

ATTACHMENT #1

Marsha Hinch
Library Director
Choteau/Teton City/County Library

I am writing in regard to the proposed rule changes as specified in the amended ARM 10.102.4001 REIMBURSEMENT TO LIBRARIES FOR INTERLIBRARY LOANS.

In studying these changes, it is my concern that the new formula for reimbursement will have a negative affect on the smaller libraries throughout Montana. The ILL program has enabled libraries of all sizes to provide their patrons the same quality of service as those persons served by larger libraries in university and urban settings. With the reduction or elimination of reimbursement to those libraries who are not "net" lenders, this service could be drastically curtailed and actually contribute to not meeting the ultimate goal the program which is to provide the best library service possible to the citizens of Montana.

It would seem to me that the ILL program has experienced tremendous success as demonstrated by the continuing demand for this service by library patrons throughout the state. Instead of discouraging the growth of interlibrary loans through a decrease in reimbursement, it would seem more beneficial to all libraries and their patrons for the commission to request additional funding for such a successful program.

I feel strongly that the most effective and efficient use of public funding results when that funding is provided directly to those entities responsible for making the service available to the recipients of that service. In this instance, all library patrons in the state of Montana.

I appreciate your consideration of my concerns.

ATTACHMENT #2

Written transcript of testimony against eh proposed Administrative Rules change 10.102.4001 Reimbursement To Libraries For Interlibrary Loans

Honore Bray, Director, Missoula Public Library

It is true that interlibrary loan request in Montana continue to grow as Montana's continually thirst for information. Montana libraries are stretching their available dollars in many directions because information is delivered in many ways. Resource sharing is one way that Montana Libraries can make the dollars stretch even farther. It is not feasible for a library to buy an obscure item for a small group of users no user should be denied access to that information because local budgets are shrinking. The answer to this issue is Interlibrary Loan or Resource Sharing among Montana Libraries. The smallest and the largest of communities have local needs that are not met by their local library due to a lack of dollars. Interlibrary Loan allows everyone access to the information they are searching for through Montana Libraries or a World-wide network of libraries.

ILL Reimbursement is what makes the smallest of libraries able to participate in the loaning process. Will they be a net lender? Probably not but they may have a book in their library that is not available in any other Montana Library and if they do not participate in ILL because the funding has been cut, then that one item is not available to the rest of the Montana citizenry. This proposal is not an acceptable fix for the Interlibrary Loan Problem in Montana. Moving the materials around the state in a more economical manner so postage costs are not prohibitive is a better answer. This proposal states that the amount each library is receiving for reimbursement is decreasing, how is this proposal going to help; now the same amount of dollars is being divided in more ways. This problem needs to be looked at in a creative manner and it will take time to find a solution. Something this important to Montana Libraries should not be decided in one Commission meeting without input from those being most affected by the decision.

Thank you for your time.

Honore Bray

ATTACHMENT #5

From: Ann Rutherford
Sent: Wednesday, June 07, 2006 9:16 AM
To: Staffeldt, Darlene; Newell, Bruce
Cc: Ann Rutherford
Subject: FW: Proposed Amendment to ARM 10.102.4001

Darlene and Bruce,

I would like to support what Mr. Cochran has to say. I also will be unable to attend your meeting, but I would like to support this via this email. I do not seem to have Ron Moody's email address. Would you please make sure he gets a copy.

Thank you sincerely,
Just me, ann

Ann Rutherford
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Marjorie Cannon
Box 355
Choteau, MT 59422

As a member of the Advisory Board – Choteau/Teton City-County Library, I am protesting this change.

We have a system in place, which is totally workable, satisfactory and successful. It has been a fair arrangement for all libraries. I see the suggested change as being completely non-beneficial to small libraries. It would, in fact, be harmful.

I predict that you will be receiving similar letters to mine, and I hope you will give them your serious consideration.

Erling Oelz
(email)

As an institution committed to sharing its resources with others, and being one of the major net lenders in the state, the University of Montana Mansifeld Library supports the amended interlibrary loan reimbursement program proposed by the Montana State Library Commission.

These changes will help ensure that all libraries within Montana, regardless of size, will continue to freely share their resources with one another. This action will continue to benefit Montana citizens by providing quick access to the best information available, and necessary for lifelong learning, teaching, research, and business.