

# Memo

**To:** Networking Task Force Members

**From:** Darlene Staffeldt, State Librarian

**Date:** January 24, 2007

**Re:** Legislative Update

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Please note the following significant dates and events as they relate to the 2007 Legislative Session:

- January 9, 2007 - After days of preparation, revisions, practicing, etc, on Tuesday at 8:30 am, we presented our budget to the Appropriations Joint Subcommittee on Education. Our hearing lasted about one hour and forty five minutes. As State Librarian I began the presentation with an overview of the State Library's programs and budget. I used three pieces in my presentation – a ten page handout, the Legislative Fiscal Division template that we prepared for them in November, and the District Highlights and Statistics Booklets. Following my presentation, additional oral or written testimony was provided by eleven others including but not limited to: Don Allen, Chairman of the Commission, John Meckler, Plains School Librarian, students from Carroll College, gentlemen from Plum Creek and Stillwater County, teachers and librarian from Kalispell High School, as well as Nanette Gilbertson, MLA Lobbyist . Lyn McKinney, Montana Library Association President spoke briefly requesting the Committee support an addition to the State Library's budget which would provide state payment for the statewide OCLC contract. There were very few follow up questions at the hearing. We felt it was a good hearing. Executive action followed on Monday, January 15, 2007 at 8:30 am. After much discussion and lots of questions particularly on the personnel services budget, the Committee took action to approve the Governor's budget for the State Library. As a reminder what was approved for our budget was:
  - 2006 base budget;
  - Fully funded payroll, including broadband increases and two vacant positions previously held open for the broadband increases;
  - Statewide present law adjustments (inflation, deflation, fixed costs, etc.);
  - Standard cost adjustments including Commission per diem, Volunteer insurance, additional funds for legal fees in the Department of Justice;

- Increasing the federal authority to spend estimated Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants awards and realign the biennial appropriation;
- Additional 75,000 for Natural Heritage Program;
- Additional 150,000 for GIS portal development/maintenance (NRIS/Heritage); and
- Additional coal severance tax funding up to \$135,000 per year Federations and for Statewide Databases, figure may be slightly less based on actual coal severance tax (CST) shared account balance, revenue projections. The current CST revenue projections from Governor's office and Legislative office are not in agreement.

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Please know that Senator David Wanzon expressed some interest in making the motion to add the OCLC statewide payment to our budget but notified Lois Fitzpatrick that he just did not feel right about doing the motion at that time. There is still a chance this will still come up in the subcommittee at a later date.

- January 9, 2007 Montana Library Association's Library Day Legislative reception 5:30 to 8:30pm. Attendance was down from previous such events but conversations and one on one discussion with Legislators were rated as very good. A positive event.
- January 12, 2007 Presented HB 132 State Publications Permanent Public Access before the House State Administration Committee. Hearing went well then spent some days negotiating a fiscal note with Department of Administration and the Governor's budget office. Executive action was scheduled on Wednesday, January 24, 2007 and motion to do pass, passed the Committee on a vote of 17 to 1. We expect to see this bill on the full House floor on Thursday or Friday.
- January 18, 2007 Presented HB 133 Information Access Montana revisions before the House State Administration Committee. Some tough questions, but all except names of my Commissioners were handled well. A good hearing. Some follow up after hearing from librarians/legislators regarding the interlibrary loan issues. No executive action yet.
- We have also been working with Lois Fitzpatrick, Montana Library Association, Representative Julie French, Senator Sam Kitzenberg, and our attorney on HB 374 which is the public library construction bill requesting five million dollars. We did provide a fiscal note requesting approximately \$100,000 to administer the program. The bill has been assigned to House Appropriations Committee but no hearing has been set yet.
- We have been asked to respond to at least six additional fiscal note requests on a variety of bills, including but not limited to special purpose districts, resource indemnity trust funds, coals severance tax funds, county museum districts, standardized complaint form to be used by public if they have a problem with a state agencies and environmental contingency account funds.