

that were inadequate. Even those states which had made the most progress toward improving their library services failed to overcome the inadequacy of their library programs. In order to solve these massive library deficiencies, it became very clear that some kind of federal assistance would be necessary. While total federal control of public libraries was objectionable, some kind of federal legislation to aid states and localities in increasing the number and improving the quality of their libraries was thought possible.⁷ However, the Great Depression of the 1930s, followed by World War II in the early 1940s, postponed the development of federal aid to public libraries until after World War II.

Edmon Low maintains that the quarter century following World War II was marked by a rising social consciousness among the American people. There was a belief that the people of this country had an obligation to help the other, less fortunate people of the world. These international efforts were characterized by the development of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Southeast Treaty Organization (SEATO), President Truman's Four Point Program for underdeveloped countries, and later the Peace Corps, developed under the Kennedy administration.⁸

After World War II, Americans became increasingly conscious of their own domestic social problems: inequality of opportunity for large segments of the population, the problems of such areas as Appalachia and rural areas of the South and Southwest, and the plight of the migrant worker. Other social concerns included fighting racial discrimination and inequality of educational opportunity, securing the right to vote with equal representation of all peoples, the attack on poverty, and confronting problems associated with environment and ecology. Education and research would play a significant role in the solution of these problems. Libraries were and still are basic and vital to research. The publications explosion after the war made evident the need for materials to be arranged, indexed and made available. It became clear that libraries needed recognition and assistance.⁹

In 1944, adequate public library service was available to less than one-half of the American population. Most rural areas had no service at all. Most areas with library service had limited book resources and personnel. In order to deal with the social problems of the day, and with the demands for research, improved education, and a better informed electorate, libraries required particular attention. As the country turned to Congress for legislation to create and fund social programs, libraries became an important part of that process.¹⁰

As early as 1944, the concept of federal aid to libraries began to

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emerge. The bill which later became the Library Services Act was first conceived by a meeting of librarians in Washington, D.C. The group included Ralph R. Shaw, librarian of the Department of Agriculture; Paul Howard, the first director of the newly established ALA Washington Office; and Carl Milam, executive secretary of the ALA. The bill was first introduced to the Senate in 1946 by Senator Lister Hill of Alabama. Many disappointing setbacks and failures followed during the next decade. Finally in 1956, H.R. 2840, which was authored by Representative Edith Green of Oregon, passed both the House and Senate. On June 19, 1956, the bill was signed into law by President Eisenhower.¹¹ Edmon Low contends that the Library Services Act can certainly be regarded as the father of modern library legislation.

THE LIBRARY SERVICES ACT OF 1956

A U.S. Office of Education study conducted in 1956 revealed that 26 million rural residents were without any public library service and that more than 300 rural counties had no public library within their borders. The study also reported that an additional 50 million rural residents had only inadequate service.¹² The Library Services Act of 1956 was a significant step forward in providing improved library services for these neglected areas.

Representative Edith Green authored H.R. 2840, which became the basis for the LSA. Green was the champion of federal aid for public libraries. On May 8, 1956, she fought for the passage of the bill before the House and argued that:

The Department of Defense is asking this year for over \$1½ billion to develop better weapons. . . . What better weapon can we have in a struggle based on science, technology—and above all on ideas—than educated minds? Books for the education of young people are as much our strength in time of war as is armament for tanks and planes. And the best evidence of the truth of that is the fact that since the war in Korea over three-fourths of a million young Americans have been rejected by Selective Service for educational deficiencies. That is an appalling waste of resources for defense, and is even a more appalling commentary on our educational neglect. It seems to me it is an unanswerable argument for the need of this particular bill.¹³

H.R. 2840 had the bipartisan sponsorship of twenty-seven

Representatives and sixteen Senators. The ALA was a strong supporter of this bill, which was also endorsed by the following national organizations: American Association of University Women, American Booksellers Association, American Federation of Labor, American Home Economics Association, AMVETS, Association for Childhood Education, Congress of Industrial Organizations, Cooperative League, Farmers Union, General Federation of Women's Clubs, International Association of Machinists, National Council of Chief State School Officers, National Education Association, National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers, National Congress of Parents and Teachers,¹⁴ Catholic Library Association, Council of National Library Associations, National Council of Teachers of English, and Special Libraries Association.

On May 5, 1956, an editorial in the *New York Times* extolled the public library as a vital symbol of educational opportunity and encouraged Congress to pass H.R. 2840.¹⁵ On May 8, 1956, the House of Representatives passed the Library Services Bill.¹⁶ The American Library Association encouraged its members to write special letters of thanks to House members who were key leaders in passing the bill.¹⁷ Senator Lister Hill (D., Alabama), Chairman of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee, was the chief supporter of the Library Services Bill in the Senate, which passed it on June 6, 1956.¹⁸

On June 19, 1956, President Eisenhower signed the Library Services Bill, and it became Public Law 597 of the 84th Congress, 2d Session. President Eisenhower stated, "The Library Services Bill, which I have today signed into law, represents an effort to stimulate the States and local communities to increase library services available to rural Americans. It shows promise of leading to a significant enrichment of the lives of millions of Americans, which, I am confident will be continued by the States when this limited Federal program comes to an end."¹⁹

The LSA was to provide an annual appropriation of \$7.5 million for the extension and improvement of rural public library service; it was to remain in effect until June 30, 1961. The following major provisions were included in the act:

Funds are allotted to the States on the basis of their rural population and are matched by the States on their per capita income.

Rural area is defined as any place of 10,000 population or less.

Funds under a State plan may be used for salaries, books, and other

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library materials, library equipment, and other operating expenses, but not for the erection of buildings or purchase of land.

The State library extension agency in each State prepares and submits to the U.S. Commissioner of Education a plan which will in its judgment, assure the use of funds to maximum advantage.

The provisions of this Act shall not be so construed as to interfere with State and local initiative and responsibility in the conduct of public library services.²⁰

Table 1 lists appropriations for the LSA from 1957 to 1960.

TABLE 1
LIBRARY SERVICE ACT APPROPRIATIONS FOR 1957 TO 1960

Fiscal year	Budget estimate	House allowance	Senate allowance	Appropriation
1957	\$7,500,000	*	\$7,500,000	\$2,050,000
1958	3,000,000	\$5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
1959	3,000,000	5,000,000	6,000,000	6,000,000
1960	5,150,000	6,000,000	7,500,000	6,000,000

*The House did not consider request; late supplemental submitted to the Senate. Source: *Congressional Record*, 86 Cong., 2 Sess. (1960), CVI, Pt. 1, p. 547.

The LSA had a significant effect on improving library services for rural America. From 1956 to 1961, "state library extension agencies [have been] able to offer increased leadership, larger collections of library materials, and expanded facilities and services for rural library development."²¹ More than 5 million books and other informational and educational materials were added to the cultural resources of rural communities. Approximately 200 new bookmobiles extended library services to people in remote areas. Increased library usage as a result of library development projects were impressive. Many county and regional library projects reported increased book circulation of 40 percent or more.²²

Comments from the following states illustrate the effectiveness of the Library Services Act:

California: A processing center was established at the State Library to serve 16 member libraries. . . . Florida: Increased book

purchases resulted in a 32 percent increase in interlibrary loans. . . . Kentucky: The greatest single accomplishment has been to bring large numbers of rural people—farmers, housewives, unemployed, small businessmen, day laborers, and workers of all kinds—into libraries and bookmobiles. . . . Maryland: Two new county libraries were established, and 13 county libraries improved their services. . . . Minnesota: The Library Services Act stimulated the enactment of the first State grant program for public libraries. Five new regional libraries serving five counties were established. Library service was made available for the first time to 68,000 rural residents and improved services to 269,000 patrons. . . . New Hampshire: Four new bookmobiles were purchased. Interlibrary loans increased 47 percent. . . . Ohio: Annual book purchases for the State Library were tripled. Bookmobile grants were made to five counties. A series of workshops on book selection and reference work were held. . . . Vermont: Five new bookmobiles, nine staff members, and new library equipment strengthened the State's library program.²³

Prior to 1961, Indiana was the only state that did not accept funds offered by the LSA; Governor Harold Handley of Indiana refused to accept federal funds for libraries. Handley was quoted as saying, "Hoosiers would be brainwashed with books handpicked by Washington bureaucrats." It was obvious that he had not read the act, which specified that the "administration of public libraries, the selection of personnel and library books shall be reserved to the States and their local subdivisions."²⁴ U.S. Representative John Brademas of Indiana labeled Handley's policy obstinate and shortsighted. Brademas estimated that there were 800,000 people in Indiana without library service. During the first four years of LSA funding, Handley pushed aside approximately \$700,000 for improved library services.²⁵

THE 1960 EXTENSION OF THE LIBRARY SERVICES ACT

During the first week of the second session of the 86th Congress, seven bills were introduced to extend the LSA for five more years. The bill which received the most support was S. 2830, introduced on January 14, 1960, by Senator Lister Hill (D., Alabama), Chairman of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee. Fifty-one Senators co-sponsored this bill.²⁶ Senator Hill argued that, "in spite of the tremendous gains made in the extension of library services where they did not exist in the past, there is a great need for the extension of this

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legislation. By the end of fiscal 1961, when this program will expire, there will still be millions of rural children and adults who have not had the opportunity to benefit from library programs under the Library Services Act. It is estimated that only half of the job will be done, that at least 40 million rural residents will still have no public library service, or inadequate service, and that 150 rural counties will still have no public library service within their borders."²⁷ On May 26, 1960, the Senate passed S. 2830 without a dissenting vote.²⁸

Carl Elliott (D., Alabama) was the major supporter in the House for the extension of the Library Services Act. Elliott called the LSA one of the most worthwhile programs of the federal government.²⁹ Elliott received the following letter concerning his fight for the extension of the Library Services Act:

U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C., August 19, 1960

Hon. Carl Elliott
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Dear Carl:

I should like to congratulate you on the magnificent fight you have made to assure the extension of the Library Services Act. I am confident that when the House acts under a suspension of rules on August 22 the bill will be passed.

As you know, I have long had a similar interest in the extension of this act, and supported it both in committee and when it passed the Senate.

When this program was first inaugurated in 1956, some 76 million people in rural communities had little or no library service. By the stimulus provided by this program, in which 49 of the 50 States now participate on a matching basis, library facilities have been available to even the smallest towns. I understand that some 5 million books have been purchased, and 200 bookmobiles have been put in operation. The program is an important asset to our Nation. It helps provide both recreation for our minds and strength and vitality for our human resources.

With every good wish, I am,
Sincerely yours,
John F. Kennedy³⁰

Opposition to S. 2830 in the House was scattered and largely ineffectual. The entire debate against the bill revolved around federal aid and was not directed against libraries. The floor opposition was led by Frank T. Bow (R., Ohio), who cautioned the members of the House that, "there is nothing as permanent as a temporary agency in Washington."³¹ Bow closed his argument against extension of the LSA by asking, "Do we believe in States' rights or do we not? If we do, we must recognize State responsibility. And I submit that one of those responsibilities is to take care of our libraries."³² On August 22, 1960, after forty minutes of debate, a standing vote was demanded, and the bill was passed by a vote of 190 to 29.³³ On August 31, 1960, President Eisenhower signed it into law to extend the Library Services Act until June 30, 1966. The new law became Public Law 86-679.³⁴

The Library Services Act extension was to continue to provide annual appropriations of \$7.5 million for the extension and improvement of rural public library service. A rural area continued to be defined as any place with a population of 10,000 or less, according to the latest U.S. census.³⁵

THE LIBRARY SERVICES AND CONSTRUCTION ACT OF 1964

On January 29, 1963, President Kennedy sent to Congress a special education message. He made the following comments regarding the status of the public library:

- (1) The public library is also an important resource for continuing education. But 18 million people in this nation still have no access to any local public library service and over 110 million more have only inadequate service.
- (2) Advanced age, lack of space, and lack of modern equipment characterize American public library buildings in 1963. Their rate of replacement is barely noticeable: two percent in a decade. There are now no Carnegie funds available for libraries—nor have there been for 40 years.
- (3) The public library building is usually one of the oldest governmental structures in use in any community. In one prosperous midwestern State, for example, 30 percent of all public library buildings were built before [the] year 1910, and 85 percent were erected before 1920. Many other States are in a similar situation.³⁶

President Kennedy concluded his comments by making the

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following recommendation: "I recommend enactment of legislation to amend the Library Services Act by authorizing a three-year program of grants for urban as well as rural libraries and for construction as well as operation."³⁷

This recommendation was significant in that it planted the germ of the idea of what was to become the most influential library legislation in the nation's history—the 1964 Library Services and Construction Act. President Kennedy did not see his dream realized, as he was assassinated four days before S. 2265 was passed in the Senate.³⁸

On October 29, 1963, Senator Wayne Morse, Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Education, introduced S. 2265, which was ultimately to form the basis for the Library Services and Construction Act of 1964. Senator Vance Hartke (D., Indiana) spoke in favor of the bill, arguing that: "Since the exhaustion of Carnegie funds 40 years ago, the physical facilities of the Nation's libraries have deteriorated. Only 4 percent of all public library buildings have been built since 1940."³⁹ Senator Thomas McIntyre also spoke in favor of the bill, contending that: "We are living in a complex and rapidly changing age. It is an age built upon the creation, the collection and rapid dissemination of accurate information. At the very heart of this communications chain stands the American free public library. . . . A good public library provides the necessary continuity in our democratic tradition and serves as the springboard into the future growth of the individual and of society."⁴⁰

Senator John G. Tower (R., Texas) was the lone spokesman for the opposition. Tower maintained that if the federal government became a party to library construction, it would then be possible for a Washington bureaucrat to decide and dictate what towns and cities would get libraries and even, perhaps, what books would be provided under the authorization of federal financial assistance for libraries. Tower insisted that the library and book field is one area of communication that the federal government should stay out of.⁴¹

On November 26, 1963, "after the stunning weekend of the assassination of President Kennedy, the Senate overwhelmingly approved S. 2265, the Library Services and Construction Act. The vote was 89 to 7, a resounding bipartisan victory."⁴²

On January 21, 1964, the House acted on H.R. 4879, the House version of the Library Services and Construction Act. The bill was authored by John H. Dent (D., Pennsylvania), Chairman of the House Select Subcommittee on Education. Dent contended that: "The public library is in a strategic position to play an important role. In the fight on

poverty and its cause, it can aid adults and those who are engaged directly in assisting the impoverished youths to gain education and training. . . . In short, the public library is now widely recognized as a vital cultural and economic resource as well as a fundamental educational institution." Dent warned that: "Serious deficiencies in public libraries exist throughout the Nation. For example, 18 million persons still are without public libraries and 110 million are hampered by trying to use seriously inadequate facilities."⁴³

John M. Ashbrook (R., Ohio) opposed the bill; he felt it was a proposal to federalize the library system.⁴⁴ Frank T. Bow (R., Ohio) also opposed the bill; he argued that it should be up to the states and local communities to support their libraries.⁴⁵

Representative Peter Frelinghuysen (R., New Jersey) offered the following amendments to H.R. 4879: "(1) a new population restriction of 20,000 instead of the complete elimination of the present population limitation; (2) a change in the authorization for services [from \$25 million] to \$15 million; and (3) elimination of the construction item of \$20 million entirely."⁴⁶ Frelinghuysen's amendments were narrowly defeated by a vote of 179 to 183.

On January 21, 1964, the House passed the Library Services and Construction Act by a vote of 254 to 107. "It should be noted that the House S. 2265 was passed in lieu of H.R. 4879 after being amended to contain the House-passed language."⁴⁷ There was a change in title of the act as follows: "Sec. 11(a) The first section of the Library Services Act was amended by striking out 'Library Services Act' and inserting in lieu thereof 'Library Services and Construction Act.'"⁴⁸

On January 30, 1964, the Senate voted to concur in the House amendment to Senate bill 2265.⁴⁹ On February 11, 1964, President Johnson signed the Library Services and Construction Act.⁵⁰ It became P.L. 88-269.

The main provisions of the LSCA are as follows:

- (1) The population limitation was removed beginning July 1, 1964. Coverage was extended to all areas of the country regardless of size.
- (2) A new construction title was added which authorized \$20 million for fiscal year 1964 and such sums as the Congress may determine for fiscal years 1965 and 1966. The Act provided minimum allotments of \$80,000 to each State.
- (3) The matching grant authorization for public library services was increased from \$7.5 million a year to \$25 million for fiscal year

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1964 and such sums that Congress may determine for fiscal years 1965 and 1966.

- (4) Construction was defined to include construction of new buildings; expansion, remodeling and alteration of existing buildings; initial equipment; and architects' fees and land acquisition costs.
- (5) The District of Columbia and Puerto Rico were included in the definition of a state.⁵¹

The authorization for appropriations under the LSCA of 1964 was to expire June 30, 1966.⁵²

THE 1966 EXTENSION OF LSCA

On March 14, 1966, Senator Lister Hill introduced S. 3076 to extend and amend the LSCA. A total of fifty-two Senators, representing forty states, joined Hill in proposing extension of LSCA.⁵³

The new Senate bill included four principal titles, with the following provisions:

Title I—Public Library Services: as in the 1964 act, matching-grant funds may be used for books and other library materials, library equipment, salaries and other operating expenses.

Title II—Public Library Construction: requested \$40 million for fiscal year 1967, and for each of the next four fiscal years, such sums as Congress may determine.

Title III—Interlibrary Cooperation: this section was a new title in the LSCA for establishment and maintenance of local, regional, state or interstate cooperative networks of libraries.

Title IV—Specialized State Library Services: this new title was designed to assist states in providing greatly needed specialized state library services. It was to be divided in two parts: (1) state institutional library services, and (2) state plans for library services to the physically handicapped.⁵⁴

On March 29, 1965, Representative Roman Pucinski (D., Illinois) introduced H.R. 14050 in the House of Representatives. Pucinski's bill had four major titles identical in purpose and period of authorization to Hill's S. 3076. The only difference was that H.R. 14050 gave a dollar figure for Titles I and II for FY 1967 and 1968, while S. 3076 listed a dollar figure just for the first fiscal year.⁵⁵ On June 2, 1965, the House

passed the Library Services and Construction Act Amendments of 1966 by a sweeping bipartisan vote of 336 to 2.

In the Senate Mike Mansfield (D., Montana) spoke in favor of extending and amending the LSCA of 1964, citing the following reasons for continuing the program:

More than 375 bookmobiles were added to existing library resources to reach rural readers. An estimated 14 million books and other informational materials were added to library collections. In the construction phase of the Library Services and Construction Act program, 53 States or territories reported that they had approved 363 local public library construction projects. . . . Of the 363 projects, 233 were for the construction of new buildings; 58 were for additions to existing library buildings; and 72 were for remodeling or alteration. An estimated 23.3 million people will be served by this new construction.⁵⁶

Mansfield warned that, "While the accomplishments to date are praiseworthy, serious gaps remain. For example, over 12 million people in this country still have no public library services and 38 percent of the public library buildings are over 40 years old. For this reason the committee unanimously supports the passage of this bill."⁵⁷

On June 22, 1966, the Senate passed its version of H.R. 14050, the Library Services and Construction Act, by a unanimous voice vote.⁵⁸ On June 28, 1965, the House agreed by unanimous consent to concur in the Senate-passed version of H.R. 14050.⁵⁹ On July 19, 1966, President Johnson signed into law the Library Services and Construction Act Amendments of 1966 (H.R. 14050), which became P.L. 89-511. The amendment would be effective until June 30, 1971.⁶⁰

THE 1970 EXTENSION OF LSCA

On September 18, 1970, Senator Ralph Yarborough (D., Texas) offered his support to S. 3318, authored by Senator Claiborne Pell (D., Rhode Island). The bill advocated the extension of the LSCA to June 30, 1976. It consolidated the library services programs for handicapped persons under Title I of the act, and expanded Title I to provide special library services for disadvantaged persons, to provide assistance to state library administrative agencies, and to strengthen metropolitan libraries.⁶¹

Senator Yarborough argued that: "The impact of this Federal program (LSA/LSCA) to libraries has been quite dramatic. Since 1957, this program has provided 45 million library books and 650 additional

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bookmobiles. . . . This program . . . has provided the funds for 1,500 library buildings which will serve 50 million people. We must continue this program of expansion if we are to keep up with the needs of our people."⁶²

On September 21, 1970, the Senate unanimously passed S. 3318. The bill authorized \$1.14 billion for the life of the bill.⁶³ Table 2 indicates the appropriations recommended in the 1970 amendments.

TABLE 2
RECOMMENDED APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE 1970 AMENDED LSCA
(IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS)

Program	Fiscal Year				
	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Title I (library services) including specialized services	112	117,600	123,500	129,675	137,150
Title II (public library construction)	80	84,000	88,000	92,500	97,000
Title III (interlibrary cooperation)	15	15,750	16,500	17,300	18,200
Total	207	217,350	228,000	239,475	252,350

Source: "Library Construction," *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, 26:851, 1970.

On September 21, 1970, the day S. 3318 was passed in the Senate, Representative John Brademas (D., Indiana) introduced a similar measure in the House to amend the LSCA (H.R. 19363).⁶⁴

On December 7, 1970, Representative Carl D. Perkins (D., Kentucky) offered his support to the bill, contending that the past accomplishments under the LSCA were impressive. He cited some examples of the act's accomplishments in the State of Kentucky: "(1) The 1700 physically handicapped residents of my State, including the blind, have been provided library services under the authority of title IV of the Act. (2) Our correctional institutions, which serve 2,864 persons, have had their library resources strengthened. (3) Thirty-one library construction projects have been assisted with a total Federal contribution of \$2,500,000."⁶⁵

Representative Brademas maintained that the amendments would advance the educational, economic and cultural level of the nation.⁶⁶ On December 7, 1970, the House version of the 1970 LSCA was passed with no dissenting votes.⁶⁷ President Nixon signed into law S. 3318 on

December 30, 1970. The new law (P.L. 91-600) extends the act through fiscal year 1976.⁶⁸

The major provisions of the 1970 amendments are:

- (1) Providing library services to the disadvantaged in rural and urban areas,
- (2) Strengthening metropolitan public libraries which serve as national or regional resource centers,
- (3) Extending library services to state institutions and to the physically handicapped, and
- (4) Improving and strengthening the capacity of state library administrative agencies for meeting the needs of the people of the states.⁶⁹

Table 3 illustrates authorizations and appropriations of federal funds for public libraries from 1957 to 1973.

THE LSCA VS. REVENUE SHARING

On January 29, 1973, President Nixon submitted to Congress his fiscal year (FY) 1974 budget. The grant program for public libraries was among the federal aid programs that Nixon proposed to terminate in FY 1974.⁷⁰

The administration believed that libraries were essentially the responsibility of state and local governments.⁷¹ Richard Nathan, former deputy undersecretary of Health, Education and Welfare, asserted that "Libraries simply are not a national government responsibility. . . . This program is a good case of a federal program that should be turned back to the states and localities."⁷² John F. Hughes, former acting associate commissioner for the Bureau of Libraries and Learning Resources, argued that "the administration has proposed termination of some other programs because they are not successful. The library programs fall into a category of successful programs. Termination of federal funds does not signify a denigration of the programs."⁷³

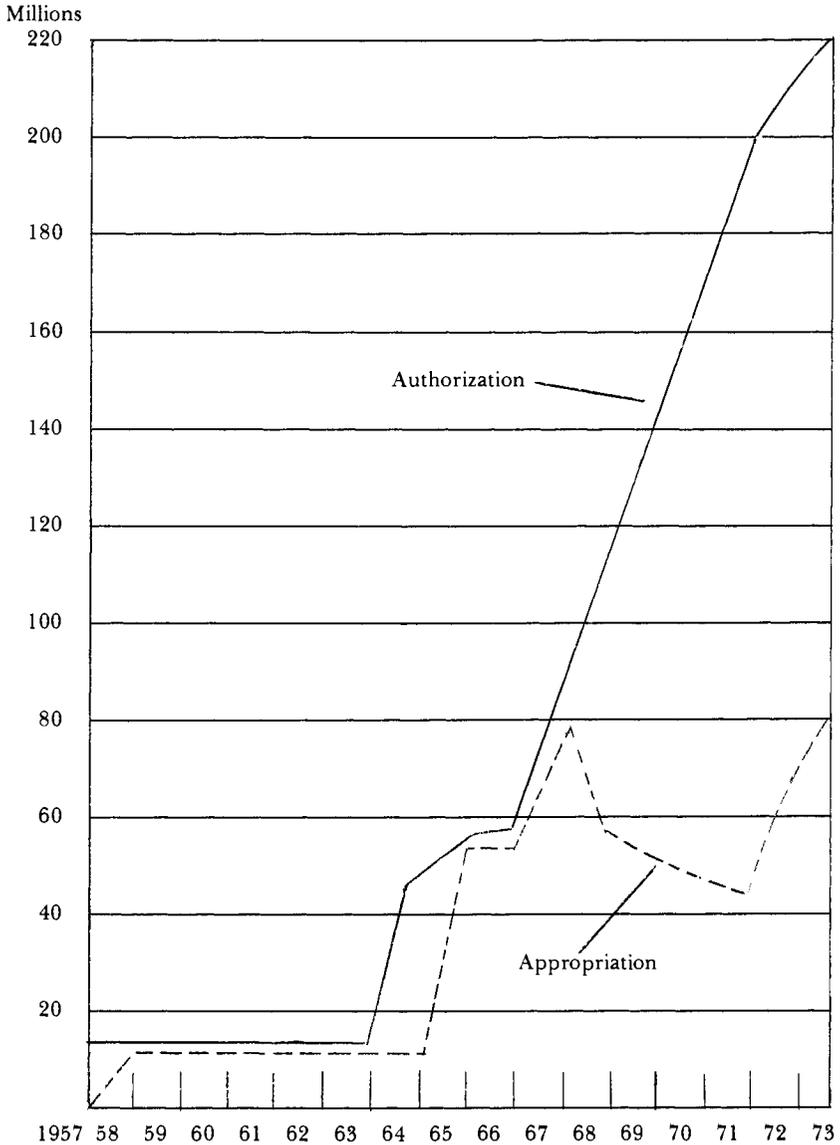
The ALA Council unanimously passed a resolution protesting Nixon's new federal budget. The council urged Congress to pass a budget that "meets the needs of all the people whose access to information is the key to effective participation in society and often the key to survival itself."⁷⁴

Senator Birch Bayh (D., Indiana) called the President's decision to cut off library funds false economy of the worst sort. Bayh argued that

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TABLE 3

FEDERAL FUNDS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES, 1957-73



Source: "Libraries: Administration Plans to End Funding," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, 31:778, 1973.

federal funds have greatly improved library services to institutionalized people in Indiana, and maintained that zero funding for library services would be disastrous to these important efforts. He stated that library services are crucial in improving the quality of life for all Americans and that he would do everything possible to make sure that federally authorized library programs receive adequate funding.⁷⁵

Senator Edmund Muskie (D., Maine) made the following comments regarding National Library Week and the proposed zero funding for libraries: "Our Nation observed National Library Week during the week of April 8-14. Normally, this week is a week of celebration of the Nation's library resources. But for those of us who view libraries as a priceless educational resource, it was a week of sorrow. The cause of this sorrow was the administration's proposal to end Federal support for public libraries."⁷⁶ Ralph Nader called for a campaign by librarians to make the public and legislators aware of the value of library service.⁷⁷

The administration suggested revenue sharing as an alternative to direct federal aid. Under P.L. 92-512, public libraries would be eligible for a slice of the state and local allocations.⁷⁸

Librarians had mixed feelings about their ability to compete with policemen and other local needs for revenue-sharing funds. Like all other segments of the economy, libraries had been hard hit by inflation—increased costs of books and periodicals, increased postal rates and salaries.⁷⁹ Joseph F. Shubert, state librarian of Ohio, summed up the problems of revenue sharing for libraries: "You have two problems (with revenue sharing). One is that the money in some cases has already been allocated and the other is that the general attitude toward revenue sharing is (not to) make long term commitments. You can't put together systems or regional cooperative operations out of bits and pieces of revenue sharing where you have to get maybe 35 different local governments each to contribute a little money to run a \$40,000 bookmobile in three rural counties. And yet not one of those three rural counties can afford to run a bookmobile program by itself."⁸⁰

On June 26, 1973, the U.S. House of Representatives rejected President Nixon's recommendation of zero funding for library programs by passing H.R. 8877 by a vote of 347 to 58. The bill, introduced by Representative Daniel J. Flood (D., Pennsylvania), was a \$32.5 billion appropriation for the Departments of Labor and of Health, Education and Welfare for FY 1974. This bill included an appropriation of \$58,709,000 for the Library Services and

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Construction Act. On July 1, 1973, President Nixon signed P.L. 93-52, which was a continuing resolution making interim appropriations through September 30, 1973. The resolution meant that library programs would be funded through September 1973, based on the appropriations provided by H.R. 8877.⁸¹

The years 1973, 1974 and 1975 found the effectiveness of the LSCA hindered by impoundments and recessions. Three amendments have been added to the act during this period: (1) P.L. 93-29, amended by the "Older Americans Comprehensive Services Amendments of 1973" to add a new Title IV, entitled "Older Readers Services." This title has not been funded; (2) P.L. 93-133, amended by the "National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Amendments of 1973." This amendment enlarges the definition of "public library" to include research libraries meeting specific criteria; and (3) P.L. 93-380, amended by the "Education Amendments of 1974" to add program priority for service to areas of high concentrations of persons of limited English-speaking ability.

Recently, the prospect of the act's expiration in 1976 has stirred some visible response on the part of Representative Harold T. Johnson of California. On February 5, 1975, he introduced H.R. 2893, which would extend the LSCA through September 30, 1978. The bill was sent to the House Education and Labor Committee. Renewal of the Higher Education Act and Vocational Education Act, both expiring in 1975, will provide a full schedule for the House and Senate authorizing committees in 1975. Amendments to the LSCA will be forced to take a back seat in Congress until 1976.⁸²

The Library Services Act of 1956 and the Library Services and Construction Act of 1964 have contributed greatly to the development of the American public library. For nearly two decades the level of library service has improved considerably. If library history has taught us anything, it is that local means, in most cases, are inadequate to offer quality library service. It would be a catastrophe if federal aid to libraries were abandoned. The library world would soon return to the status of the 1930s. Federal aid to libraries must remain strong if the American public library is to continue to improve its services to every citizen. Congress will have to decide whether the federal government has any responsibility for maintaining and improving libraries.

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