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Chair's Column

Johanne Greer, Maryland
LRL Chair

This will be my final column for NEWSLINE, as my tenure as the Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section Chair will come to an end soon. It has been a wonderful experience, and I want to thank you for this opportunity. I have enjoyed working with many of you and am honored to have worked with legislative colleagues from around the United States.

As a staff section chair, I participated in the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee meetings that took place in different areas of the country. It was a great learning experience. I must admit that I was a bit intimidated at first, working with the likes of executive directors of legislative agencies or Speakers of the House and Senate Presidents. However everyone has been genuinely supportive and has wanted me to succeed at making this a vital staff section within NCSL. I am very grateful for that support and encouragement. I will miss the camaraderie that NCSL afforded me in this position.

I encourage anyone who can, to become involved with NCSL, which brings to mind the eight vacancies on NCSL's Executive Committee. If any of you can make a commitment of three years and want the experience of a lifetime, you should consider serving on this prestigious committee. Clare Cholik (SD) has served on the committee in the past, and Jonetta Douglas (IA) is serving her last year, so the Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section will not have a representative on the committee after August. I would consider running, but the bylaws allow that only one person at a time from any state can serve and Maryland is already represented. Anyone interested should send a letter of declaration to the Staff Nominating Committee Chair, Thomas R. Tedcastle, in care of NCSL.

With the exceptional help of Rita Thaemert, our NCSL liaison, and the other Legislative Research Librarians officers, Nan Bowers, Chair Elect; Beth Furbush, Secretary; and Susan Southworth, Immediate Past Chair, we have been busy preparing for the Annual Meeting that will be held in San Antonio, Texas, August 11-15. We have

prepared several informative sessions as well as a trip to Austin to visit the State Capitol and the Legislative Reference Library. We will return in time for a spectacular event at San Antonio's Alamodome that features a live rodeo complete with horses, longhorn steers, and armadillo races. Cheryl Nyberg will present a program on the elements of a great legislative website, with examples of one or more of the criteria. Cheryl currently serves on a committee that is assisting government officials and website managers to improve the delivery of legal information via the web. There will be two joint sessions with the Research and Committee Staff Section on writing for the legislature and communicating effectively in a changing legislative environment . This year's annual meeting is shaping up to be informative, busy, and fun. Even though it will be rather warm (okay hot), there will be plenty of air conditioning even on the buses that transport attendees between hotels and meeting sessions. I hope you will try to attend this year's meeting and take part in the wonderful programs and activities that NCSL has planned for us. It is one of the best opportunities you will have to network with your colleagues from around the country.

In ending, I just want to convey my deep appreciation to NCSL for a very fulfilling experience and to all of you in the Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section who make this group such a success. You have made my job easy.

Beth Furbush**Montana Legislative Reference Center**

April 24, 2001

TO: NCSL LRL Staff Section

FROM: Beth Furbush

RE: Resignation

This is a very sad letter to write, but I'm afraid I am going to have to resign my leadership responsibilities for the LRL Staff Section. As you are aware, I am entering into extensive and debilitating therapy for colon/liver cancer and the prognosis is uncertain. My oncologist advises disability retirement as I am physically unable to perform in this position and need to be focusing my energy on healing.

Obviously, I am also unable to take on the many challenges of heading the Legislative Research Librarians staff section. I was looking forward with much anticipation to the wonderful opportunities, but it is simply not going to be possible. My actual retirement will not come into effect until July 1 and I should be able to complete the Secretarial duties of this commitment until the time that I have actually left this job if that would be helpful.

I will certainly try to stay in close touch with all you wonderful people and hope to be able to come to North Dakota in 2002 for the Hostfest (ask Marilyn about this!)

Please be assured that the Montana Legislative Reference Center and the Montana Legislative Services Division will continue to strongly support and participate in the activities of the Staff Section, maintaining our long association with the LRL. My position will probably be taking on increased responsibility for management of electronic content, both internal and web-based content in coordination with traditional collection development and management. The Library Technician position (currently held by my outstanding assistant, Bentley Utgaard) is likely to take on further basic collection development responsibilities and will remain a prime reference contact for our office.

So despite sad changes, there are positive sides for the office and for myself – reconfiguring and revitalization for the office and an early rest and hopefully return to health for myself.

With my deep appreciation for the many years of collaboration and support I have received personally and professionally from the LRL staff section,

Sincerely,

Beth Furbush

Montana Legislative Librarian

Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee

May 18 and 19

Yosemite, California

The Task Force for Promoting Professional Development

Johanne Greer

At our last meeting we reviewed several ideas for getting more staff to stop by the "Staff Information Booth" at the NCSL Annual Meeting and came up with a creative idea for drawing attention to the booth. We decided to have a raffle. The prize will consist of a framed collection of buttons from all 50 states and US territories. Every state will be contacted and asked to send two buttons to a designated person who will then ship them to NCSL for framing. There will be two drawings on different days. We thought this would be an excellent way to get more staff stopping by the booth to drop off a business card for the raffle. I know I will!

A report was made on providing CLE, CEU and CPE and other certification to NCSL staff attendees. After contacting different states, it was determined that there was not enough interest in continuing education credits to make this a priority. These credits have no impact on job advancement or security. A survey of Legislative Staff Managers on Recruitment and Retention of Legislative Staff was completed and the finding will be published in a future issue of STATE LEGISLATURES.

Task Force on Promoting NCSL Services to Legislatures

Nan Bowers, Nevada

The task force considered several technology topics. NCSL is working on a State Legislation and Bill Status System, which would allow multi-state bill tracking by subject or number. Doug Sacarto, NCSL webmaster, demonstrated a search on a prototype of the system, using current bill databases of California, Indiana, Ohio and Virginia. A major obstacle for implementation of the tracking system will be convincing all state legislatures to provide their bill information in uniform data fields.

As an assignment for the subcommittee on website search function, I surveyed a dozen LRL members on their use and problems with searching the NCSL website. Overall, the librarians found the site difficult to use, but commented on the wealth of material available through the site. See the following article for more detail.

Other topics discussed by the Promoting NCSL Services Subcommittee include *Ideal Legislature* scenario, and evaluation of outreach materials and efforts to engage new legislators.

LRL Librarians Respond to NCSL Web Survey

Nan Bowers

The technology subcommittee of NCSL's Task Force on Promoting NCSL Services to Legislatures asked that I survey several LRL librarians on their use of NCSLnet. Thirteen volunteers from the listserv responded to four questions: how often do you use the NCSL website; how often do you use the search function; describe a high quality internet site you access; log into the NCSL website, conduct a search, and provide details of the search experience.

Here are a few general conclusions: about 75% of respondents use the website and search feature 'once in a while'; a few sites the librarians like include govspot.com, stateline.org, speakout.com, refdesk.com; searches performed met with various success, though several librarians commented on difficulties in use, relevancy of hits, or confusing search options. Some queries, like 'charter schools' and 'cell phones and driving' were very successful, while queries, like 'rolling blackouts' and 'correctional industries' did not produce the expected results.

NCSL staff will be making adjustments to the search function and adding a feedback feature, so keep this site in mind for your reference use. There is a tremendous amount of information on the site. If you would like to see the complete survey responses, request through email to nbowers@lcb.state.nv.us.

Register online for Annual Meeting at www.ncsl.org/am01/

Preliminary Agenda

**Legislative Research Librarians
NCSL Annual Meeting
San Antonio, Texas
August 11-15, 2001**

Saturday, August 11

LRL joins the Research and Committee Staff Section, Legislative Information and Communications Staff Section and Leadership Staff Section

1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Writing for the Legislature: Write It So They'll Read It!

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Speaker: Leita Hart, Leita Hart and Associates, Austin, Texas

Communicating Effectively in a Changing Legislative Environment

3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Speaker: Dr. John Daly, University of Texas, Department of Communications Studies

Sunday, August 12

Opening Plenary Session

1:00 - 3:00 pm

Delivery of Legal Information via the Web

4:15 - 5:30 pm

Speaker: Cheryl Nyberg, Reference Librarian, Marian Gould Gallagher Law Library, University of Washington School of Law, Seattle

Monday, August 13

Staff Luncheon Kathleen Jamieson

12:00 noon - 2:00pm

Dean of the Annenberg School for Communications, University of Pennsylvania

Bus Trip to Austin Capitol and Legislative Reference Library

2:15 pm

LRL Reception on the Bus

Texas Social Event Alamodome

6:00pm - 10:00pm

Tuesday, August 14

LRL Lunch and Business Meeting

12 noon - 1:15 pm

Plenary Session Frank Luntz

3:45 - 5:15 pm

One of the nation's best known pollsters

Wednesday, August 15

Plenary Session

9:45 - 10:45am

Lila Cockrell Theatre

2002 Colorado Kick-Off Luncheon

12:30 - 2:00 pm

**More About Cheryl Nyberg
Annual Meeting LRL Speaker**

Cheryl Nyberg is Winner of the 2001 Marta Lange/CQ Award

For Immediate Release

February 8, 2001

Cheryl Nyberg, reference librarian at the University of Washington Gallagher Law Library, is the recipient of the Marta Lange/CQ Award for 2001. The Law and Political Science Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries made the announcement at the midwinter meeting of the American Library Association last month in Washington, D.C.

The selection of Cheryl Nyberg for this award recognizes her service to librarians who specialize in law and political science, in accordance with the award's goal to honor a practitioner who has actively advanced law and political science librarianship. Known since 1979 for her annual annotated bibliography, Subject Compilation of State Laws, Nyberg also published in 2000 a significant new work, State Administrative Law Bibliography: Print and Electronic Sources.

"Cheryl Nyberg's fastidious research, her dedicated publication, and exemplary service have been to the benefit of all law and political science librarians," said Committee Chair Susan Parker. "The award describes her work perfectly."

The Marta Lange/CQ Award recognizes an academic or law librarian who, through research, other creative activity, or service to the profession, makes distinguished contributions to bibliography and information science in law or political science. Established in 1996, the award honors Marta Lange, the 1990/91 ACRL Law and Political Science Section (LPSS) Chair, whose exceptional talents as a leader were enhanced by a wonderful collegial spirit. Her bright career, cut short in a fatal automobile accident, was an inspiration to others and a model of professional service.

PDS Preview

The 2001 LRL Professional Development Seminar in Richmond, Virginia, October 10-13, will be a joint meeting with the Research and Committee staff section and will include several stimulating sessions, a trip to Lexis Law Publishing in Charlottesville, a visit to Monticello, workshops specifically for LRL and an optional visit to Colonial Williamsburg on Saturday. Please plan to join us.

Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations

(For many years, ACIR provided valuable documents to NCSL's Legisnet clearinghouse. The kind of information ACIR provided for libraries was unique and has not been available from other sources.)

Advice to Congress -- Bring Back the ACIR

In his latest column in the series "The Politics of State Taxation," State Tax Notes Contributing Editor David Brunori advises the new Congress to re-establish the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR).

Brunori argues that in an age of global interdependence, the nature of appropriate intergovernmental relationships has never been less clear. In this atmosphere, he asserts, a revived ACIR -- a federal body charged with studying fiscal and structural federalism, with formal appointments of lawmakers and executives from the federal, state, and local levels -- could play a vital advisory role. Its abolition five years ago, Brunori concludes, "can only be described as a shortsighted effort to save money."

Although the new Congress has not yet requested my help, I want to start the year off by offering some advice on strengthening our federal system of government, particularly as it relates to taxes.

My advice is simple: Bring back the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR). It has been five years since the ACIR was eliminated, in what can only be described as a shortsighted effort to save money. But the issues that made the commission's work so important at its inception 42 years ago are as relevant today. Indeed, the appropriate roles of national, state, and local governments in an age of global interdependence have never been less clear -- or the need for the ACIR's guidance more clear.

Some people reading this will have no idea what I am talking about. They should know that the ACIR was the only federal body charged with studying fiscal and structural federalism. And it was the only federal commission with formal appointments of lawmakers and executives from the federal, state, and local levels.

They should also know that practitioners and policymakers had high regard for the ACIR for its intellectual honesty, nonpartisan approach, and overall integrity. The ACIR helped further the understanding of the often-complicated issues involved in running a federal democracy. The decision to eliminate the commission was a mistake, but that mistake can easily be rectified by the 107th Congress.

A Brief History of the ACIR

The ACIR was established by an act of Congress in 1959. The theory behind its creation was that each level of government had an important and distinct role to play in formulating and administering policies.

The new commission had 26 members -- four governors, three state legislators, four mayors, three county officials, three federal executives, six members of Congress, and three private citizens. The president appointed all commissioners except the members of Congress, who were appointed by the House and Senate leadership. The state and local members were recommended by the "Big 7" group of government associations. The membership represented the diverse interests of all levels and branches of government and brought a unique perspective to public affairs.

The ACIR was charged with several responsibilities. It was to bring together representatives of federal, state, and local governments to address common problems. It was to provide a forum for discussing the administration and coordination of federal grant programs requiring intergovernmental cooperation. It was to provide research and make recommendations to the executive and legislative branches on the allocation of government functions. And -- most important for this discussion -- it was to recommend methods of coordinating and simplifying tax laws and administration practices to achieve a more orderly and less competitive fiscal relationship between the levels of government and to reduce the burden of compliance for taxpayers.

Most knowledgeable observers would agree that over the next 37 years the ACIR performed its duties remarkably well. With a small staff, and what must have seemed an impossibly small budget, the ACIR conducted important research on a variety of subjects important to federal, state, and local governments. It studied and commented on law enforcement, transportation policy, welfare, and environmental protection, as well as a host of other policy issues.

But the commission made its biggest impact, in my opinion, in its work on fiscal federalism. During its existence, the staff of the ACIR researched, evaluated, and analyzed how the various levels of government collected taxes.

The ACIR did groundbreaking work on a number of fiscal issues. The commission developed the Representative Tax System, which compares the fiscal capacities of the states. Much of what we know about state taxation has been learned through this system. The ACIR produced the first major work on payment in lieu of taxes to address issues raised by the proliferation of tax-exempt property. The commission was instrumental in developing circuit-breaker property tax relief, which ultimately eased the public's discontent with the property tax. ACIR economists performed much of the early work on indexation of personal income taxation -- a key ingredient of a fair tax system.

More important, the ACIR conducted early -- and significant -- work on the effects of a changing economy on public finance. It produced studies on the telecommunications industry, banking deregulation, and interstate sales. The effects of electronic commerce on sales taxation are now vigorously debated nationwide. But the ACIR conducted the first comprehensive study of consumption taxes and remote sales long before the issue reached national prominence.

The ACIR also published *Significant Features of Fiscal Federalism*, the most informative collection of fiscal data available. That annual publication contained updated information on changes in state tax rates, shifts in intergovernmental fiscal relationships, types and costs of government services -- as well as which governments provided them -- and economic and demographic changes that affect government operations. Researchers within and outside of government found the information contained in *Significant Features* invaluable.

And the ACIR commissioned an annual opinion survey to gauge the public's attitudes about the ways in which the various levels of government collect taxes. The importance of these polls cannot be overstated. Policymakers and scholars used the information to place such developments as the property tax revolts of the late 1970s and early 1980s into context. Moreover, the success of political campaigns promising to cut federal income taxes was better understood when the ACIR polling data showed a deep dislike of the tax. Similarly, the public's acceptance of state consumption taxes no doubt propelled their rise to dominance in state public finance. The ACIR's work led to a better understanding of the American tax system.

Perhaps it should not be surprising that the commission was so successful over so many years. It was led by individuals such as the venerable John Shannon (now a fellow at the Urban Institute and a member of State Tax Notes' Advisory Board) and John Kincaid (a political scientist at Lafayette College, and perhaps the leading scholar on federalism in the nation today).

Those working on fiscal federalism were equally noteworthy. The ACIR's alumni include Alice Rivlin, Robert Ebel, Phillip Dearborn, Harvey Galper, Robert Kleine, and Ronald Fisher. These individuals have made an indelible mark on the field of state and local taxation and intergovernmental finance. Now serving in government, academia, and think tanks, they remain leaders in the field.

The ACIR's Demise

Beginning in the 1980s, congressional support for the ACIR declined for a number of reasons, the most obvious of which was the growing federal budget deficit. Many members of Congress began to argue that funding for the ACIR was no longer justified and that the commission should be terminated. On several occasions in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the House of Representatives actually eliminated funding for the commission, but sympathetic senators managed to restore funding each year. While the commission managed to hang on, Republicans -- particularly Rep. Ernest Istook, R-Okla. -- and conservative organizations such as the Heritage Foundation remained determined to save the taxpayers money by eliminating the ACIR.

But the end of the commission was brought about by its study of federal mandates. In 1996, the ACIR staff published a preliminary report recommending that certain federal mandates not apply to state and local governments. For example, the ACIR recommended that Congress repeal provisions in the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the Occupational Safety and Health Act that extend coverage to state and local governments. This controversial report would sound the commission's death knell.

Environmental and labor groups launched a national campaign against the ACIR's preliminary report on mandates. Unfortunately, in attacking the report, many of those groups also managed to smear the reputation and integrity of the ACIR. Many supporters of the ACIR (including me) disagreed with much of the preliminary report. That was not surprising. After all, federal mandates were controversial, and the solutions were subject to considerable disagreement and debate.

Nonetheless, soon after the report on mandates was released, remaining congressional support for the commission dried up. By 1996, the ACIR had both liberals (who disagreed with the report on mandates) and conservatives (who were on a mission to cut spending) calling for its elimination.

In the end, the ACIR did not have enough sympathizers to survive the onslaught. That in itself was probably not surprising, because as an organization conducting research on federalism it did not have a natural constituency. Its demise was not greeted with public protest or intense lobbying. And, as John Shannon pointed out in these pages, congressional support for the commission may have declined because by the mid-1990s the state governments were no longer the weak partners in the federal system. The states had become important and influential in a wide variety of public affairs. In a sense, the need for Congress to "look out for" the states was not nearly so great.

The irony, noted on more than one occasion, is that the end of the ACIR was brought about in a Republican-controlled Congress that wanted to reform the roles of the federal and state governments. GOP members of Congress, who sought to reassign policy responsibilities to the states, led the fight to eliminate the one organization that could help them understand the ramifications of such policies. The end of the ACIR also came during the administration of a former governor who purportedly realized the importance of the commission but did little to support its work.

Bring It Back

There are several reasons why the 107th Congress and the Bush administration should reestablish the ACIR or a similar organization.

First, the landscape that made the mission of the ACIR so very important over the past four decades has not changed. Indeed, if anything, there now is even more justification for a nonpartisan research/advisory body dedicated to addressing intergovernmental issues.

The respective roles of the federal, state, and local governments are in flux. Responsibilities have shifted back and forth over the past several decades. Welfare policy, for example, once the domain of the federal government, is now largely run by the states. Similarly, the states have taken a larger role in financing public education, traditionally a local government function. At the same time, there are many policy areas in which all levels of government play an active role. These include law enforcement, environmental protection, and transportation policy. There are few people who understand the complexities presented by American federalism.

The uncertainty of governmental functions will likely increase. The age of electronic commerce and the globalization of markets are changing the way the world conducts business. But they are also changing the roles and responsibilities of government. The dynamics of economic development and interjurisdictional competition -- key concepts in American intergovernmental affairs -- are continuously evolving.

An organization like the ACIR could help Congress and the administration make sense out of the various functions performed by the various levels of governments in our federal system. The ACIR could provide those charged with formulating federal policy information on the legal, structural, and financial ramifications for state and local governments.

A new ACIR would be particularly helpful in the field of taxation. Our nation's tax systems have come under increasing pressure in the new economy dominated by mobile capital, electronic commerce, and world markets. Both sources and methods of taxation are changing, and those changes affect how governments act and interact. As the often-acrimonious debates over taxation of the Internet illustrate, more cooperation is needed. The ACIR was designed to foster such cooperation and to effectively and efficiently find solutions to intergovernmental problems. Understanding fiscal federalism has never been more important. And once again, an organization like the ACIR could place these dynamics in perspective.

Second, the important work conducted by the ACIR has never been duplicated. In 1995, some thought that nonprofit organizations and academics would assume some of the commission's mission. That has not occurred. The ACIR's research (more than 220 reports) is no longer being conducted, and its data publications are no longer being published. To be sure, several professors are conducting research in the field. And the Urban Institute's "Assessing

the New Federalism" project has been examining the devolution of social programs. But no organization is charged with systematically studying the various aspects of American federalism. The ACIR's dispassionate and nonpartisan research has been sorely missed.

Third, and more practically, reestablishing the ACIR would be politically smart. The new administration and congressional leadership are talking a lot about bipartisan cooperation. President-elect George W. Bush has been meeting with governors on how the federal and state governments could work together to solve some of the nation's problems. The president-elect, along with Republican gubernatorial allies like Wisconsin Gov. Tommy G. Thompson, has governed in an era of incredible economic and political change. They understand (better than the Clinton administration, I'd bet) the need to carefully consider federal policies that affect state and local governments. The new president says he is committed to working with the states. What better way to highlight that commitment than to reestablish an organization that was by definition dedicated to fostering understanding and cooperation?

Republicans, who dominate the 107th Congress, and centrist Democrats are determined to bring government "closer to the people." People who usually utter that phrase should be committed to ensuring that state and local governments have the authority and resources to set and carry out their policies. One would think that a majority of both houses of Congress could be convinced that funding a new Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations would advance that cause.

Moreover, there is not much risk in advocating the return of the ACIR. The federal budget deficits that were the nominal reason for eliminating the commission are a thing of the past. Reestablishing the commission would cost a tiny fraction of the federal budget surplus. In 1995, the federal appropriation totaled \$1 million. The commission raised another \$750,000 from state grants, federal research contracts, and publication sales. There is little reason to believe that a new commission would be prohibitively expensive. Certainly, no one who advocates its re-establishment could be accused of espousing "big government."

Fourth, and most important, the ACIR should be brought back because it furthers the understanding of our federal system of government. A new advisory commission would go a long way toward assisting Congress and the administration in understanding the effects of their policies on American federalism. A bipartisan commission with many members from the federal, state, and local governments could review research and make recommendations to the president and to congressional leaders.

The United States is the greatest democracy that ever was partly because of the unique concept of federalism. If reestablishing the ACIR will strengthen federalism -- and I think it will -- then it will be a small amount of money very well spent.

(c) Tax Analysts 2001

NCSL Publications

Copies of all NCSL publications listed here are available from the Marketing Department at 303/364-7700.

Books

- Native American Legislation
- Child Support 101: Why Do We Need Child Support?
- Major Health Care Policies: 50 State Profiles
- Children, Youth and Family Issues: 2000 State Legislative Summary
- 2000 Information Technology Laws
- 2000 Telecommunication Laws
- California Power Crisis
- Teacher Policy in Vermont
- Inside the State House: The People and Ideas that Shaped School-to-Career Legislation
- State Alternative Fuel Vehicle Incentives
- Driver History Records
- SCHIP Chart Book 2000
- Pricing Auto Insurance: A Study of Ratemaking in Connecticut
- Increasing Dentists' Participation in Medicaid and SCHIP

State Legislative Reports

- State Crime Legislation in 2000, Vol. 26, No.1
- Juvenile Justice State Legislation in 2000. Vol.26, No.2
- State Incentives for Energy Efficiency, Vol.26, No.3
- Postsecondary Enrollment Options Programs, Vol.26, No.4
- Energy Strategies for the Public and Private Sectors, Vol.26, No.5
- Child and Family Service Reviews: Implications for State Oversight of Local Child Welfare Agencies, Vol.26, No.6

Legisbriefs

- Women's Health: Coverage of Services, Vol.9, No.19
- Electric Industry Restructuring and Air Quality, Vol.9, No.20
- Bioterrorism, Vol.9, No.21
- States Face New Federal .08 BAC Penalties, Vol.9, No.22
- States Laws Affecting Lesbians and Gays, Vol.9, No.23
- The ADA at Work, Vol.9, No.24
- Retaining Viable HMOs for Medicaid, Vol.9, No.25
- Eco-terrorism--A New Kind of Sabotage. Vol.9, No.26
- Domestic Violence and Welfare Reform, Vol.9, No.27
- State Programs for the Working Uninsured, Vol.9, No.28
- Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century, Vol.9, No.29
- Disproportionate Minority Representation in the Juvenile Justice System, Vol.9, No.30

Thanks to all of the staff section members and others who submitted columns and information for this issue. Your ideas and submissions are welcome. *Newsline*, published four times annually by NCSL's Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section, is edited by Rita Thiemert.

Vacancy advertisement:

The Montana Legislative Branch is recruiting for the position of Legislative Librarian. The position is responsible for collection administration, electronic information management, reference and technical services, and managing the budget and staff of the Legislative Reference Center. Requires the equivalent of a Master's degree in library science or a related field with an emphasis in electronic information management and two years related experience. Starting salary \$38,339/yr. For further information contact the Montana Job Service or visit jsd.dli.state.mt.us. EEO/AA.