



# NEWSLINE

## LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH LIBRARIANS

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### Chair's Column

*by Robbie LaFleur, Minnesota  
LRL Chair*

Recently, staff members from various offices were discussing how to write a compelling description of an upcoming legislative conference. We want members and staff to sign up as quickly as possible. "I know what NOT to write," one researcher said, "Don't use 'think outside the box!'" Everyone groaned in agreement. "Or col-LAB-orate!" she added.

So while I was thinking of writing about the importance of legislative libraries collaborating with NCSL, I think I'll change my tune. How about this? I really think legislative libraries should work closely with NCSL whenever possible.

NCSL assigns a staff liaison to every state. I encourage you to become acquainted with that person. Be sure the NCSL liaison is aware of the library's services and abilities to support NCSL work in your state, and that you are a repository of NCSL documents. Offer info that NCSL researchers might need from your state.

Remind the liaison that librarians can also help members and staff with searching the NCSL database (or do searches for them - not every legislator or staff person likes to do electronic research yet!)

There is increasing focus at NCSL on individual and personal communication with legislators. To be an effective legislative service agency in our home states we need to capitalize on the work of NCSL - effectively use NCSL services, and augment them with our expertise, skills, and knowledge. For example, an NCSL policy analyst may produce a fine state-by-state comparison of an issue. But a researcher who receives only that report misses important coverage; articles, news clippings, or perhaps a local task force covering the same issue in depth for his or her own state.

NCSL staff and information products are fabulous. Get to know the staff. Use NCSL materials, and supplement them with important local information to provide the best service possible to our legislative clientele.

Finally, and most importantly, I offer heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped with our fabulously successful Professional Development Seminar in Bismarck. Marilyn Johnson did a splendid job of organizing and arranging; Rita Thmert supplied the

crucial NCSL support to make it all happen. Thank you to our member speakers - Deb Priest, Nan Bowers, Eddie Weeks, Shelley Day, and Susan Gilley. And everyone who came! Our conference experience was rich because of the enthusiasm, contributions, and comments by all the attendees.

In this issue several enthusiastic Newslines contributors have supplied detailed information on PDS sessions--so much so, that we will finish coverage of the remaining sessions in the Winter Newslines. Enjoy!



### **LRL Professional Development Seminar**

**October 9-12**

**Bismarck, North Dakota**

**Thursday, October 10**

#### **Number One is the Loneliest Number - Communication and Consensus Building**

*by Betsy Lazan, Arizona*

Orange bandana-clad Dave Pearce in well-worn overalls was the first session's guest speaker. Billed as an entrepreneur, philosopher, and consultant, Mr. Pearce gave us an informal introduction to consensus building. He also knew the main secret of successful public speaking: he first gave his audience pumpkin cookies and postcards! Through a series of anecdotes, Mr. Pearce shared his insights on successful service.

One amusing story led to another. We learned his business, PaPa's Pumpkin Patch, had come about through "one happy accident after another, if you choose to use that perspective." Originally a grower of tomatoes, Mr. Pearce recounted that when the Bismarck city authorities asked if he could grow pumpkins, he didn't say "no." He did let them know about his inexperience, however. His positive attitude carried him through when the city didn't quite indicate that a small size of pumpkin would be required and they would need them 30 days earlier than anticipated.

Instead of bemoaning the fact that he was left with hundreds of pumpkins, Mr. Pearce invited classes of schoolchildren to visit the patch and pick up pumpkins when they were ready. When North Dakota teachers greeted the new event with too much enthusiasm, rather than turn some classes away, he bought pumpkins from his neighbors to cover the shortfall. Today, PaPa's pumpkin patch is a beloved North Dakota tradition, featured yearly in the *Bismarck Tribune* and recently as the cover article of North Dakota's visitor magazine *Inspire*.

The energetic Mr. Pearce also recounted his childhood, emphasizing how his family's phrases "Can't Never Learned Anything" and "You Aren't Going to Learn Any Younger." helped him through life. The childhood visit to the Soviet Union as part of the 4-H club would later encourage him to return to the Russian Republics as a professor and consultant. He described his experiences there as he worked hard to build the trust of Russians who found his desire to live in North Dakota (so-called "Siberia of America") incompatible with his advanced computer skills and university education. "You are 'espion'-spy" they stated. By gaining their respect and the friendship of the local Russian postmaster, he was able to send his foreign students all souvenir postcards of his patch.

With a reading of Dr. Seuss' *The Letters Beyond Z* and an amusing tale of how the Russian Orthodox churchmen sang for church collections, we hardly realized all the wisdom Dave Pearce had left with us before it was time for the next session.

His "perspectives from the patch" included:

1. Don't say no, but don't promise perfection.
2. If you must speak publicly or ask for money, be entertaining.
3. If you do say yes, don't just give "yes"; give *yes-and then some*.
4. There are no mishaps in life, just "happy accidents."
5. "Look for the luck in life."
6. You can get more things done by winning people's trust.

**Thursday, October 10**

#### **Count on Users - Acquiring, Storing, Labeling and Accessing Audio Records**

*By Kristin Ford, Idaho*

Best thing about attending an LRL meeting? Getting out of town, dining on "foreign" foods, listening to speakers are great, but for me, no contest, the best thing about an LRL meeting is the chance to talk to other legislative librarians and compare practices. The session on acquiring, storing, labeling and accessing audio records was the first of several roundrobin sessions

allowing us to do just that. Susan "OK" Gilley set the discussion in motion with the question "*Which states maintain audio records of the legislative process and how?*"

In planning this article, I originally intended to speak of general practices mentioned by the states, but the practices and philosophies are so different, that I think it will be more interesting to list the responses of each state. My *apologies* for any misstatements or inaccuracies that may follow as a result of trying to read my own cryptic scrawl three weeks later! Everybody, take this information with a grain of salt and confirm with the appropriate librarian anything you need to know. My *gratitude* to all of you librarians who were able to correct or confirm my notes when I contacted you. Here is a rough description of state practices!

Oklahoma: Some senate floor debate tapes were preserved, not indexed.

Missouri: No floor debate or committee hearings are recorded and preserved.

Pennsylvania: Transcripts of committee hearings are up to the chair. Rarely are the hearings taped/transcribed. There is floor debate. Both chambers do gavel to gavel coverage.

Michigan: Senate and Approp. Cmte. Minutes are taped, unknown how long they are kept, but kept in staff offices, not in the library. A copy is made for the public three to four times a year. House committees do not tape meetings.

Montana: No tapings of floor sessions. Committee hearing audio tapes are available from 1997 to the present (along with a tape log). These are stored at the historical society where people can have copies of the tapes made for \$5. There were full paper minutes until 1997 when they decided to do the audio tape thing and the tape log. I believe that decision was made largely because they had difficulty finding secretaries who could accurately take the minutes. This year, for the first time, we are going to videotape six committee hearings. These will be put on DVD and a copy of the DVD will be sent to the historical society, the law library, and legislative library. Sounds like copies of the DVDs will be made at the law library. There will be a videotape log as well.

Louisiana: Nothing on the Senate side is archived. The daily floor debate is broadcast, but the Senate leadership did not want any thing put on tape. House floor and committee meetings are taped and archived. The last full year is available on the House home page.

Prior to that the meetings are kept on the hard drive and the daily video tapes are archived as well. There are plans to transpose all of that to another longer-lasting format, but nothing has been decided yet.

Minnesota: Legislative Library is the official custodian. They keep 10 years' worth of audio tapes of committee hearings and floor debates; the tapes are currently indexed in an Access program. They are researching the possibility of digitizing in the future, and converting the older tapes to digital format. Older tapes are sent to the Historical Society for another 10 years, after which time they are destroyed. This is because of a bad past experience with a mold infection and the cost of redoing the tapes is prohibitive. Video of floor sessions and selected committee hearings are also available on the Web for recent years.

New York: They have tapes of regional economic hearings, teleconferences, on cassettes in a staff member's bookcase, "chronologically, oldest to the left (real low tech)." Access has not been an issue because no one asks to listen to them. They probably throw them out in 10 years. Deb noted that the Assembly treats its non-core documents pretty ephemerally, whereas the Senate has a formal program of archival preservation of all its information, despite format.

Nevada: The library keeps audio tapes of floor sessions for 4 years then sends them on to the State Archives for permanent retention. Tapes from the 1960s are on reel to reel, tapes from the 1970s through 1999 are on cassette, and beginning in 2001 tapes are digital. Library staff can search the digital tapes and email segments. Committee hearings are recorded and retained four years then erased. Detailed minutes are produced from the tapes and kept in paper and microfiche format, and also available on the website from 1993 forward. The 2001 audio is also digital and specific segments can be searched and listened to with the aid of lognotes. Software used is FTR Gold, which is basically digital court recording software. Most committee meetings are videotaped.

Tennessee: Floor debates have been recorded since the 1970s, committee hearings since the 1980s, and subcommittee hearings since 1990s. Two full time staff members deal with these recordings. All are on audiocassettes. No formal transcripts are made; a requester must hire their own transcription service if they want one made. Logs help people find the dates and appropriate committee hearings. If a tape has not been listened to after some time, to preserve it they play and re-record it on a new tape.

*Postscript from Eddie:* This is a service of the State Library and Archives, not the Legislative Library, and the staff members are a part of the Library and Archives. Direct line for Legislative History is 615 - 741 - 1549.

Arizona: The Arizona State Library, the Senate Resource Center and the Clerk of the House are the places to go for legislative history. Often, people come to the library and use the House and Senate journals to get bill numbers or committee names, then go on to the Senate or House.

House floor debates were on the Internet for the current session. Senate floor sessions were filmed and broadcast on a local public access channel. Floor debates are on audio format from approximately 1996 or 1997 to the present.

The legislature has digitized 2001 and 2002 interim committee minutes. The Arizona State Library (an Arizona legislative agency) has digitized selected interim committee 'reports' from 1998 and 1999 on, though the format is soon to change and more will be added. <http://www.lib.az.us/is/lsc/subject.htm>

The Clerk of the House has interim committee minutes from 1991 respectively to the present on audio tape as well. Paper interim committee minutes are from 1990. The Senate has interim committee minutes from 1969 on in paper.

The legislature has digitized standing committee minutes for both House and Senate from 1997 on. <http://www.azleg.state.az.us/committees.htm>. The Senate Resource Center has committee meetings from approximately 1996 or 1997 on in audio format. The Clerk of the House has standing committee minutes from 1992 on in audio format. The Senate has paper copies of standing committee minutes from 1969 on. The House has paper copies of standing committee minutes from 1965 on.

California: Almost everything is videotaped, for the Senate and the Assembly, for the last 10 years. The television groups have these tapes and you can get copies, if you know what to ask for. Legislative librarians have the same access any member of the public does.

Texas: Dale notes a "heavy use of audio tapes." They have a large number of requests for assistance from the public in tracking dates down, which they need to get access to the tapes. The House keeps its own tapes; the Senate keeps them for 1-2 sessions, then sends them to archives.

Ohio: No audio tapes are available of anything. Videotapes of floor debate can be obtained from a television station. Not sure how long they are kept, nor how the station finds the appropriate clips. Some committee hearings are also videotaped sporadically.

*Postscript from Debbie:* Ohio Government Telecommunications (OGT) videotapes and broadcasts sessions of the General Assembly. The web site ([www.ohio.state.us](http://www.ohio.state.us)) doesn't make any mention of taping and broadcasting committees, so it must not be done enough to bother mentioning. From the web site you can view clips of sessions; you can also request to purchase videotapes of certain segments. The database goes back to 1997 (much farther than I thought). The search options are, to pick from a list of daily sessions, search for a specific bill or resolution, select a specific day, or search for an individual's name or team (this appears to be geared to locate appearances by groups receiving resolutions or locating the clip of a certain minister's prayer. There is not a key word search on a legislator's name or subject of a bill. I have not had any discussions with OGT about how long they plan to keep these. Actually I don't even refer people to the archives, but I plan to a little more testing to get more familiar and then refer people because the archives seems to work rather slickly. There are no audio tapes of sessions available to the public.

North Dakota: Committee hearings are taped and correspond to written minutes. No record of floor debate exists even though constituents, lobbyists, and historians complain.

Utah: They have floor debate back to the 1950s on compact disks. These are kept in Senate and House offices and can be copied onto tape for the public. They are in the process of transferring the live debates and archiving them online so you can listen from 1999 to the present. Committee hearings are taped. The House keeps them for a few years, then might destroy them and rely entirely on the paper record. The Senate keeps their tapes. Interim committee tapes are available to the public until the written minutes are produced, at which time the tapes are destroyed.

New Mexico: The journal clerks have tapes of the floor debate that they work from, but they are work notes only, and the tapes are destroyed after a year, once the paper journals are produced. The journals are only procedural, however. No committee hearing records.

Oregon: Oregon has some committee minutes from as early as 1925. Complete session and interim minutes begin in 1953. Audio tapes begin sporadically in 1959 and are comprehensive beginning in 1965. Minutes vary in content from committee to committee. The trend now is toward less content and to the tape log format, forcing researchers to listen to the audio, which from the 1999 session to date is on the legislative website. The floor proceedings are archived on the Internet and used a lot

more than the committee hearings. Archives office has the minutes online on their web site. Chamber audio is also available on the legislative website.

### **Friday, October 11**

#### **Count Your Blessings - Electronic Documents Panel Discussion**

*By Dave Harrell, Oregon*

Panelists: Nan Bowers, Debbie Tavenner, and Eddie Weeks

The emergence of electronic publications raises many issues (no pun intended) for libraries.

Electronic serials often are initially offered as an add-on to a print serial only to later supplant the print version and be available only as an e-document. Will the initial html link stay consistent? Will we be notified consistently of each issue? How long will the back files be available and who is responsible for maintaining? Should it be the publisher, commercial vendors or libraries? Will the archives contain the entire publication or only selected articles? How do state libraries handle electronic publications created by state agencies?

Debbie Tavenner stated that in Ohio there is no aggressive plan in place to obtain electronic documents. Often, legislative staff makes them aware of an electronic serial and library staff pursues acquisition. Many of these serials are fairly expensive but do allow for several passwords with each subscription. When serials are available in both print and electronic formats, staffers usually prefer the e-version because it is available almost instantly. When the paper version arrives it is checked in and stored. Debbie also noted that some newspapers formerly offering free web versions, i.e. *The Columbus Dispatch*, are now making the web version only available with a paid subscription. Electronic documents are printed out and then cataloged. Ohio is currently undertaking the "Digital Documents Cataloging Project" with the state library providing leadership.

Eddie Weeks firmly believes "electronic documents are not permanent." When an e-document is received it is printed and filed or cataloged. He notes that e-docs are often revised but there is no formal mechanism to make people aware of the revised version. Tennessee state agencies are often "skirting" the depository requirement and simply sending an e-mail announcing the availability of a report and leaving the printing responsibility up to the e-mail recipient. Eddie is requiring state agencies to fulfill their obligation to provide printed documents. Further complicating the issue, when an error is discovered, authors of an e-doc simply correct and repost, whereas an error in print usually generates an errata. Tennessee maintains some electronic serials such as FFIS, but only a few titles. At best, Eddie believes electronic documents are a "slippery slope."

Nan Bowers informed us that Nevada goes as far as printing and binding electronic documents that go into their collection. Dale Propp stated Texas prints, catalogs and notes the associated URL.

Robbie said Minnesota does the same and uses a common sense approach. Only "substantial" e-documents are cataloged. If the document has many pages, they try to obtain a print copy from the source. Robbie also noted the *New York Times Co. v Tasini* decision further muddied the waters as papers can copyright only articles written by their staff, not by any freelance writers. Those articles aren't available in the e-version or via commercial database providers.

Nan concluded by noting we are all grappling with this emerging issue and we will surely revisit it often, maybe in Portland!?

### **Saturday, October 12**

#### **LRL Business Meeting**

*By Dave Harrell*

Chair Robbie LaFleur opened the meeting and thanked Marilyn Johnson and Rita Thaemert for their hard work that resulted in making this a very successful professional development seminar. Robbie also thanked Immediate Past Chair Nan Bowers for her thoughtful involvement in our staff section and as a consistent contributor to NCSL.

Rita Thaemert noted that NCSL's Denver office has moved into their new building. Lost boxes aside, the move went fairly well. The new commute is a different story for some.

Deb Priest graciously thanked us for her individual staff achievement award. She extended her thanks to members of the Notable Documents Award Committee. The committee had a large pool of excellent documents to choose from. More categories this year allowed for awards in more areas and formats. Deb noted that some units continue to produce a large volume of excellent work, so they were recognized for their corpus of work. Deb kept track of the hours involved this year in chairing the documents committee and shared those figures with us. Robbie will make those figures available to the staff section. Deb made a barely veiled hint at her possible retirement in the next year or so.

Nan Bowers spoke to the problem of not always receiving NCSL documents. Rita pointed out that some are produced with grant

monies and often only a small number are printed. She also pointed out some items indicate they are serials but in fact are issued only once. If it is a serial produced with grant funds and the funding ends, the serial usually ends or at best is then infrequently produced. She cited Clean Air Newsletter as an example. Also contributing to the problem is that many work products are e-documents, never intended for print or subsequent mass distribution. Authors of printed documents are supposed to make sure libraries receive priority in distribution, but e-documents pose the largest notification problem. Rita made us aware of an NCSL internal e-mail alert generated by Doug Sacarto that lists new documents. That e-mail link will be sent out via our listserv so we can evaluate and subscribe if desired.

Robbie shared her plans for her upcoming year as staff chair. She will continue the work of making our staff section more visible within NCSL. Robbie and Nan have been appointed by Gary Olson, LSCC Staff Chair, to committees to review and revamp the NCSL website and to continue the work on the NCSL National Bill Text and Status System. LRL staff section input is invaluable to these projects.

The NCSL Annual Meeting in 2003 will be in San Francisco and a possible topic is e-mail management. Our PDS in 2003 will be in Portland, Oregon. Topics under consideration are collection development, collection weeding, trends in libraries, cataloging software, ECS and/or CSG presentations, marketing the library, and managing upward. Marilyn Johnson asked if it would be possible to conduct a survey to determine if legislative history information is online for each state and if so, where it resides. This would be very useful information to have available.

The meeting was adjourned and most people boarded the bus to travel to Hostfest with Marilyn.



### **Coordinators Corner**

The questions for this issue are: (1) How are legislators addressing significant budget shortfalls in your state? (2) Have fiscal problems directly affected your library?

#### **Coordinator Suzie Johnston, Louisiana**

##### *Alabama*

Helen Hanby reports that the Alabama Legislature passed two constitutional amendments creating Rainy Day Accounts for the General Fund Budget and the Education Budget to prevent proration.

As a result of a tightened budget, the Legislative Reference Service library is not renewing some subscriptions of periodicals and newsletters. They have stopped updating hard copies of the Southern states' codes and are considering the use of electronic databases in the future for the same information.

##### *Georgia*

Martha Wigton, of Georgia's Senate Research Office, notifies us that currently, the state of Georgia is experiencing its 15th straight month of declining net revenue. In the August report of the Department of Revenue, collections are reported to be down 11.5 percent from Fiscal Year 2002. The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget requested that all state agencies and departments propose options for withholding an additional two percent of their 2003 appropriations as a precautionary measure. This is in addition to a one-percent holdback ordered when the appropriations bill was originally signed.

Increases in Medicaid continue to be one of the greatest cost drivers, and changes in the federal tax code are proving to have a very significant, long-term impact on the availability of state funds. To this end, lawmakers and budget writers will be scrutinizing existing services and programs for any cost-savings and debating the merits of any proposed expansions.

The legislature approved a total of \$1.2 billion in bonds to cover capital outlay needs, over 50 percent of which was used for education. For the first time in several years, the bond package included funding for the construction of public libraries. The State Law Library, under the administration of the Department of Law, is operated as a public library used by the courts, members of the General Assembly and its staff, and the general public.

In Fiscal Year 2002, the Law Department used \$40,000 from its departmental budget to subsidize the library's current operations. At the time of the budget negotiations, the Attorney General told members of the Appropriations Committees of the House and Senate that an additional \$40,500 would be needed to maintain the current collection without adding additional publications. The 2003 projected shortfall was estimated at \$143,000, derived from an expected increase of twenty-five percent

in legal publications costs cited in the 2001 edition of the "Legal Information Buyers Guide and Reference Manual." In response to this testimony, the Senate appropriated an additional \$50,000 in Fiscal Year 2003 to "provide additional funding to help maintain current collections in the Law Library."

#### *Louisiana*

Authur McEnany informs us that state department budgets, especially the Department of Health and Hospitals, are being cut due to a \$30 million shortfall in Louisiana's budget.

Suzie Johnston reports that the David R. Poynter Research Library continues to re-evaluate services that have been offered in the past, hoping that electronic newspapers, online publications, and free information databases will serve as new, reliable resources. Some marginal reference and serial publications were removed from the collection because of their expense. Where labor intensive routines were once the order of the day, jobs such as clipping and filing have been reduced. Strenuous hiring limits reduced the number of positions available for hire (mostly student interns). The staff members were restricted in the number of over-time hours they could work.

#### *Tennessee*

Eddie Weeks breaks the news that legislators passed "the biggest tax increase in Tennessee history" (according to a local newspaper), mostly in the form of a one-cent sales tax. His state will have a new governor, and both leading candidates have expressed opposition to the idea of a state income tax. A special session on the Tennessee budget seems likely in the near future.

Although the state does not have term limits, there will be at least four new senators (out of 33) and 17 new representatives (out of 99). These out-going members include the chairs of the agriculture, calendar, commerce, and finance committees.

Eddie communicates that the Library and most state departments and agencies, were told to prepare "emergency budgets" that figured in a 5 to 10% decrease from previous funding. Fortunately, his budget went up enough to cover anticipated rising costs for binding and subscriptions.

#### **Coordinator Dave Harrell, Oregon**

*From Dave*

The Oregon Legislature just completed the fifth special session of this year on September 17th. We came into special session to address, once again, the continuing general fund revenue collection shortfall. We patched the leak this time by securitizing a portion of the future tobacco settlement payments, some targeted cuts to agencies (including ours), and a proposed income tax surcharge referral to appear on a January 2003 ballot. It was long as special sessions go (18 days).

Since we meet only in regular sessions during odd numbered years, permanent staff assume duties that would normally be held by session staff. I act as Senate Sergeant at Arms in addition to library duties. It makes for many long days and some long nights as *sine die* came at 1:00 a.m. this time. As mentioned, the agency as a whole took another cut, this time six percent (\$1M). However, this cut did not affect the library, as we took our cut after the 2001 session that resulted in the loss of one FTE and a reduction in the acquisitions budget.

#### *Kristin Ford, Idaho*

In Idaho, the budget news is grim and grimmer. Revenues continue to be well under those projected, and the governor recently ordered an additional 3.5% reduction in state agency budgets, in addition to recommending raiding various state funds, including most of the last of the state's cash reserves. Legislators have not taken any action since they adjourned in March 2002, with some concerns over the costs entailed in holding a special session; however, the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee will meet in October to review the governor's actions and plan for possible negative supplemental appropriations in January 2003. I have managed to hang onto my only library assistant, so the library will not lose any positions, although unfortunately a different position will be cut from the Legislative Services Office.

And that's all the news from Lake WoeBoiseGone!

#### *Nan Bowers, Nevada*

Nevada is also having a severe budget shortfall and all state agencies are asked to cut 3% across the board. The governor wants to empty out the rainy day fund but the legislature wants to leave some money for the next rainy day. The upcoming session will focus on new sources of revenue. We are constitutionally barred from enacting a state income tax. The legislative

agency is likewise cutting the 3%, and I'm directed to lop off 10% of the library acquisitions budget. I'll be cutting CQ Weekly Report, but at \$1850, we'll have to get our congressional news elsewhere. Fortunately, our upgrade from InMagic DB Text to InMagic WebPublisher had been approved earlier so we can go ahead with our plans in that area.

*Karen Mau, Hawaii*

In the 2002 legislative session they used interest from our hurricane fund, cut special funds and utilized a portion of our rainy day fund to balance our budget.

We have not been able to increase our library budget for the last six years.

### **Coordinator Clare Cholik, South Dakota**

*From Clare*

In South Dakota, legislators were forced to dip into the state's reserve funds this year to balance the state's budget. The terrorist attacks, subsequent downturn in the economy, and the repeal of the state's inheritance tax all contributed to the shortfall. Next year, the legislature is likely to face an even bigger challenge balancing the budget since the deficit is projected to be larger and the sales tax revenues are not keeping up with projections. Compared with many other states, however, South Dakota's budget problems are small. The legislators' insistence on maintaining a "rainy day fund" has paid off.

Fiscal problems have not affected library services within the Legislative Research Council, but we are mindful of the fact that cuts may need to be made in the near future.

*Marilyn Johnson, North Dakota*

In July, revenue forecasters predicted a \$43 million dollar shortfall for the 2001-2003 biennium. Oops. North Dakota joined the ranks of the 46 states with real and projected budget deficits. As a response, Governor John Hoeven ordered state agencies to cut spending one percent. Agencies must submit 95% requests for the 2003-2005 budget cycle. To ease the revenue-expenditure gap, the Legislative Assembly's interim Budget Section approved use of up to \$25 million from the Bank of North Dakota on an as-needed basis. In August the state maintained a \$9.8 million cushion, but forecasters call for a possible \$50 million deficit next year. Would you want to be on an appropriations committee?

Economic reality puts in jeopardy the library's 2003-2005 budget request for converting a variety of records to CD, including the 2003 standing committee documents. Every three years the library contracts to create discs in a series of bills as introduced. Though 2003 is the year to do that, the project may be postponed.

*Peg Jones, Nebraska*

The Nebraska Legislature began dealing with budget shortfalls in November 2001 during a special session called by the governor. The state's budget crunch dominated the subsequent 2002 regular session and was the subject of another special session called in the summer of 2002.

During the 2001 special session, the Legislature reduced state spending by \$171 million, primarily through a reallocation of cash funds. In the 2002 regular session, the Legislature cut \$95 million in spending and temporarily raised the sales, income, and cigarette taxes, generating \$140 million as a stopgap solution. During the special session this past summer (2002), the Legislature cut another \$71 million from the state's budget. Higher education and Medicaid bore the brunt of the budget reductions.

Budget woes will again be the focus of the upcoming session in January 2003. The Legislature is expected to face another \$230 million budget shortfall before June 30, 2003.

Our library hasn't faced budget cuts that would affect services we provide to state senators.

### **Coordinator Marian Rogers, Wisconsin**

*From Marian*

A budget adjustment bill was introduced in January 2002 to deal with the shortfall; Wisconsin Act 109 (with partial vetoes) was signed on July 26, 2002. Solutions to the budget deficit were addressed in ways ranging from direct state agency funding and position cuts to sale of some state-owned aircraft. Act 109 provides for use of tobacco settlement funds in lieu of raising taxes to fund the revenue shortfalls. Another billion dollar-plus shortfall is expected in the next biennium -- it's not yet clear how the



state will deal with it. A detailed summary of Act 109 (by the Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau) is available on the Web <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lfb/2001-03BudgetAdjustment/act109.pdf>

We are conservative with our publication purchases, travel and training budgets are restricted, and any vacant positions will not be filled. Also, the Bureau's move to renovated space in a building with other legislative service agencies has been delayed until 2003-04.

*Arnold Weinfeld, House Democratic Policy Staff*

Michigan's budget shortfall continues to be an ongoing problem. Beginning last fall (2001) Governor Engler issued Executive Orders that cut \$539 million in general fund spending in a number of departments for FY 2002.

In early July of this year, the Legislature and governor wrapped up work on the FY 2003 budget and plugging continuing holes in the FY 2002 budget. The cornerstones were a cigarette tax increase of 50 cents to \$1.25 per pack and freezing the scheduled reductions in our Single Business Tax.

Yet, as we enter the fall, the upcoming lame duck session and the closing of the FY 2002 books, economists predict a continuing shortfall of about \$150 million for FY 2002. This will have to be addressed by the Legislature after the election or through Governor Engler issuing another round of Executive Order budget cuts. As we move into the FY 2003, current estimates have us at a shortfall of \$500 million. By law, our next revenue estimating conference is scheduled for mid-January 2003, although one could be called earlier.

*Linda Hess, Michigan Legislative Service Bureau*

Direct effects of the fiscal situation on the Legislative Service Bureau's Research & Reference Collection have been limited so far. We are much more selective when it comes to acquisitions and take advantage of electronic resources whenever we can. Reports printed from the Internet are cataloged and bibliographies sent to legislators and staff include several links to internet sites in a "current events" section. Our newest project is to try increasing usage of our extensive vertical file by scanning representative articles from selected files and adding them to our local intranet. We would be interested in hearing from anyone with experience in putting vertical file materials online. ([library@lsb.state.mi.us](mailto:library@lsb.state.mi.us))

*Research Analyst Terry Bergstrom*

Reports on the state's approach to the budget shortfall: The State of Michigan shares the economic problems facing the national economy. Nonetheless, Michigan has, for FY 2002-03, tentatively increased K-12 education funding, held higher education funding harmless, lowered the income tax rate and provided new single business tax filing threshold reductions.

According to an August 2002 Senate Fiscal Agency memorandum, the budget has been enhanced in part by transfers from the Merit Award Scholarship Fund (\$72.5 million), the Tobacco Settlement Trust Fund (\$3 million), Employment Contingent Fund (\$89.5 million), and the transfer of certain service fee revenues to the General Fund (\$40.8 million). In addition, a tax amnesty program (\$22.1 million), tobacco tax increase (\$100.8 million), new Sunday lottery draw (\$27 million), the frontloading of state summer property tax collections (\$474.3 million), and withdrawals from the state's rainy day fund (\$552.3 million) were projected to bring the 2002-03 budget into balance. Year-end revenue collections below previous estimates and a stagnant economy continue to place pressure on the budget, however, and these conditions will undoubtedly bring more changes.

*Anne Rottman, Missouri*

Things are not getting better financially for Missouri, in fact, some say that this next fiscal year may be worse. As far as the library goes, we are holding our own -- not having to cut anything yet.

*Debbie Tavenner, Ohio*

Since the main budget bill, enacted in July 2001, the legislature enacted two other budget bills to deal with shortfalls in revenues. One of the main items in the last bill was an increase in the tax on tobacco. A new budget bill will need to be enacted by July 2003; funds are expected to be tight.

The budget cuts have not yet severely reduced materials for the LSC Library. Some subscriptions were cancelled, (US Law Week and print Ohio Shepard's were the biggies), but there are more than adequate alternative resources. There were some discussions about eliminating either LEXIS or WESTLAW, but for now both services are still in use. The Commission authorized the director to proceed with July raises that coincide with raises for collective bargaining employees. Typically merit raises are also authorized in September, but this year the director chose to postpone any consideration of those at this time. Travel is not

banned, but is less freely approved. Typically there is a limit to the expenses that are reimbursable.

*Andrea Bean Hough, Indiana State Library-Indiana Division*

In a special legislative session, the General Assembly passed a stop-gap measure, HB1001ss. This raised some fees and taxes on gaming and cigarettes, but legislators will have to address the ongoing financial problems caused by the economy in the coming legislative session. More information can be found through the State Budget Agency's Web site at <http://www.IN.gov/sba/>.

The fiscal problems of the State of Indiana resulted in an 8.2 percent permanent cut in the library budget, as well as a ten percent one-time reduction for fiscal year 2003.



**News**

*Wisconsin*

Edith Woodward, former librarian, passed away October 18, 2002. Edith, active in NCSL during her tenure with LSC (1969-1983), was 85 years old.

For the first time in several years, we have a library school student using our library to learn about government libraries as a fieldwork project. She will earn three credits for the 150 hours she works with our library staff.

Also, we are participating in a statewide study committee to make recommendations on the future of the Wisconsin Documents Depository Program. Two central questions the study committee is addressing are: who will be responsible for creating original cataloging records for Wisconsin State Documents? and how should we preserve electronic documents?

*Indiana*

The Indiana State Library and Historical Building has been undergoing a long-awaited renovation and restoration program, costing \$17 million, since June 2001. Renovations are to be completed by March 2003. Long-time Director of the Indiana State Library, C. Ray Ewick, is retiring in December 2002.

*Idaho*

There is a lot of interest locally in our Task Force to Study Campaign Financing for Judicial Elections, whose charge is to study campaign financing for judicial elections, including possible funding limitations, disclosure and reporting requirements for individuals and interest groups, timing and frequency of reporting, and enforcement and penalties. This subject arose after a lastminute attack on our Supreme Court Chief Justice during the primary in May by a straw organization which declined to reveal its funding sources.

Another hot topic is the revision of our death penalty statutes, following the U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision invalidating our system allowing a judge (rather than jury) to impose a capital punishment sentence.



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