
Federal Agency and Federal Library Reports

National Commission on Libraries and Information Science

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Charles E. Reid
Chairperson

The three major events in 1991 for the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) were the commission's twentieth anniversary celebration in January, the second White House Conference on Library and Information Services (WHCLIS) in July, and the passage of technical amendments to the commission's enabling legislation in August. The White House conference dominated all other activities, but the commission pursued and made progress on other programs, too, despite a budget of \$732,000 (\$18,000 less than the previous fiscal year), staffing at only 6.5 full-time-equivalent positions (the level resulting from cutbacks during 1990), and vacant seats on the commission.

Charles Reid continued as commission chairperson, and Peter Young as executive director. In January Elinor Swaim was elected to a one-year term as vice chairperson and Daniel Casey to the executive committee, with Michael Farrell as alternate. Other members were Wanda Forbes, Jerald Newman, Julia Li Wu, and Winston Tabb, representing Librarian of Congress James Billington. Kay Riddle was confirmed as a commissioner in May 1991, and the terms of Carol DiPrete and Raymond Petersen expired in July 1991. In November the Senate confirmed DiPrete and Barbara Taylor for second terms and Norman Kelinson, Ben-Chieh Liu, and James Lyons as new commissioners.

Highlights of the Year

Twentieth Anniversary Celebration

On the evening of January 23, 1991, more than 250 current and former commissioners gathered with staff, associates, friends, and other distinguished guests in the Library of Congress for a reception to celebrate NCLIS's twentieth anniversary. The event was cosponsored by the Center for the Book, which also launched its "1991 — The Year of the Lifetime Reader" campaign. First Lady Barbara Bush was present to receive the Twentieth Anniversary Special Recognition Award for her work in support

of literacy. The 1991 Annual Recognition Award went to the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. for its "Right to Read" project.

White House Conference on Library and Information Services

The White House Conference on Library and Information Services (WHCLIS) was planned and conducted under the direction of NCLIS. NCLIS Chairperson Charles Reid and WHCLIS Advisory Committee Chairperson Richard Akeroyd were conference cochairpersons, and Joseph Fitzsimmons was vice chairperson. Commissioners served on committees dealing with delegates' credentials and conference rules and recommendations. At the last of several joint sessions on October 24–25, WHCLIS Advisory Committee members shared their observations and suggestions for actions with NCLIS representatives. [A special report on the conference, held July 9–13, 1991, in Washington, D.C., appears in the Special Reports section earlier in Part 1—*Ed.*]

On November 21, NCLIS presented the WHCLIS summary report to President Bush. He had 90 days to transmit the report to Congress with the administration's recommendations. At year's end, NCLIS had begun identifying priorities and methods for coordinating efforts to implement the 95 recommendations passed at the conference.

Technical Amendments to NCLIS Statute

On August 14, President Bush signed into law (P.L. 102-95) amendments to the commission's enabling legislation (P.L. 91-345). The new law makes clear that NCLIS is to be involved in international cooperative activities and that it can receive monetary and other contributions. It also increases the commission's 20-year-old authorization level from \$750,000 to \$911,000 for FY 1992 and authorizes "such sums as may be necessary" for all subsequent years. (The actual appropriation for FY 1992 is \$831,000.)

Library and Information Services to Native Americans

The Committee on Library and Information Services to Native Americans held its fourth and fifth regional hearings to obtain information on the status of tribal library and information services and to receive recommendations on the kinds of services needed by the tribes living in each region. (The first hearing, for the Southwest, was in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in January 1989. The second, for the Southeast, took place in Winter Park, Florida, in March 1990. The Northeast hearing was held in Hartford, Connecticut, on October 24, 1990.)

Twenty-three tribes participated in the fourth regional hearing in Seattle, Washington, on August 16, 1991, for the Pacific Northwest and the Mountain Plains. Before the hearing, site visits were conducted in California, Montana, and Washington. The fifth hearing, in Anchorage, Alaska, on October 16, 1991, was also preceded by site visits. At both hearings there was testimony in support of improved library facilities, professionally trained library staff, technical assistance, and additional and consistent funding for tribal libraries.

While the two hearings and the site visits were being planned and carried out, a strategic plan was being drafted to provide Native American tribes with adequate library and information services. The commission also helped plan and carry out the February 28–March 3 pre-White House Conference on Native American Library and

Information Services and the special May 23 hearing on Native Americans, called by Senator Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), chairperson of the Select Committee on Indian Affairs. A forum on library and information services to Native Americans on May 22 was cosponsored by NCLIS, the National Indian Policy Center, the American Indian Library Association, and the Society of American Archivists.

Library Statistics

NCLIS continued to work with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) on the cooperative library statistics program begun in 1988. In April 1991, NCES made available the first data from 8,699 public libraries in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, based on national standard data elements and definitions, in both printed and machine-readable form on floppy disks. By the end of September, all data for 1990 had been collected and were being analyzed for completeness and quality before publication in 1992. Development of the Public Library Universe File, with directory information on all public library service units in the United States, progressed much more rapidly in 1991 than expected.

NCLIS, NCES, and the American Library Association's Office for Research and Statistics took a major step forward in 1991 in their cooperative work on academic library statistics. Standard software was used to record the 1990 statistics submitted by the states. This could expedite publication of the data by nine to twelve months. Further improvements in the quality and usefulness of the data from the 1992 and 1994 biennial academic library surveys are planned.

A new questionnaire on school library media centers and specialists, developed by NCES in cooperation with NCLIS and the American Association of School Librarians, was field-tested in March 1991. The major NCES School and Staff Survey for 1990-1991 also contains several key questions on library media centers. Surveys being planned include a state library survey and a survey of federal libraries and information centers, which may be implemented in 1993. A survey of state-based networks is also under consideration.

Support for Executive and Legislative Branches

Working with the Legislative Reference Division of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)—which coordinates and clears executive agencies' recommendations on proposed, pending, and enrolled legislation—NCLIS reviewed documents pertaining to the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, the High Performance Computing Act (with a section on the National Research and Education Network), the American Technology Preeminence Act, and the National Literacy Act. The commission also conferred with OMB regarding the proposed revision to Circular A-130, "Management of Federal Information Resources."

NCLIS helped to arrange the joint congressional hearing during the White House Conference on Library and Information Services. NCLIS Chairperson Reid sent letters to the states encouraging them to adopt and implement policies similar to the congressional resolution on permanent paper and subsequently reported to Congress on their responses regarding use of permanent paper or plans to do so.

International Programs

Since FY 1986, NCLIS has cooperated with the Department of State to monitor and coordinate proposals for International Conventions and Scientific Organizations Contributions (ICSOC) grants and to disburse the funds. The six-year total is \$1,055,500, of which \$182,000 was awarded in FY 1991 to support a variety of international library, information, and archival activities. The technical amendments to the commission's enabling legislation that passed in late summer make it clear that NCLIS is to be involved in international cooperative activities (P.L. 102-95, sec. 4.).

In August 1991, Commissioner Daniel Casey represented NCLIS at the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) conference in Moscow. During meetings with Casey, IFLA's president and secretary expressed interest in adapting the commission's Principles of Public Information for international use.