

April 9, 2001

To: Montana Library Commission

From: Karen Strege, State Librarian

Re: 2001 Legislature report

2002-03 Budget Request

The House Appropriations Committee considered our funding request in HB2, the budget bill on March 7. The Education Appropriations Sub-Committee modified the governor's budget to include one-time only funding for some increases in NRIS's budget. A few members of the full Appropriations Committee had questions about the complexity of NRIS funding, but no member offered amendments to MSL's budget and members approved the budget recommended by the sub-committee. However, the committee passed an amendment that cut travel budgets of all state agencies. The full House passed HB 2 without any changes to our budget, except for adopting a global amendment that decreased personal budgets in each agency.

The next step in the budget process was a hearing by the Senate Finance and Claims Committee. This committee restored about 39% of the travel cut made by the House Appropriations Committee and eliminated the personnel cuts. After the full Senate passed HB2, the bill was assigned to a conference committee, that will begin deliberations on April 10.

Bills

The House Appropriations Committee passed HB 105, sponsored by Representative Dick Haines, which would establish a GIS trust fund. However, Senate Finance and Claims Committee tabled the bill.

HB 124, the big bill, has passed the House and has received approval from the Senate Taxation Committee. As of today, the Senate has not scheduled the bill for consideration.

The Governor signed HB 130, sponsored by Representative Bob Lawson, which will clarify library federation law. The bill received no opposition in the Senate.

SB 139 and 140 missed the transmittal deadline and are therefore dead.

SB 149, the library district bill, sponsored by Senator Lorents Grosfield, was approved by the Senate and the House. The Governor has signed the bill.

