

# Memo

To: MSL Commission  
From: Karen Strege  
Date: 12/19/2007  
Re: EPP issues for FY06 and FY07

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## **Proposal One – Restore state funding for libraries**

We ask that the state aid to Montana libraries be restored to the level of funding present in 2002. The 1989 Information Access Montana Act provided for state aid to public libraries. The purposes of state aid are to:

- broaden access to existing information by strengthening public libraries;
  - augment and extend services provided by public libraries; and
  - permit new types of library services based on local need.
1. Restore the per capita, per square mile by \$20,000 to \$230,994 for the biennium. Local libraries face local funding decreases at a time when information and knowledge are becoming critical for the social and economic health of a community. What does it mean for a small community to have a Library that cannot meet the needs of its citizens? We speak of economic development, education, and access to information, and the needs of citizens for accurate and relevant information in a democracy, the digital divide, all dependent in some measure on access to free public libraries.
  2. Restore the interlibrary loan reimbursements by \$300,000 to \$600,000, its FY 2002 level, for the biennium. Montana has reimbursed loans among all Montana libraries since July 1, 1989. Compared to most other states, Montana is "resource poor;" our scarcity of resources mandates that libraries share their resources to provide citizens with access to information. Access to information or intellectual capital is as important to the future of our communities as access to financial capital.
  3. Restore the \$158,400 cut in Library Federation support to \$358,400 for them biennium the FY 02 level. The Federation system allows Montana's librarians to network and receive continuing education in a cost effective manner at the regional level. Federations offer library workers in Montana's rural areas the benefits of quality education opportunities and the ability to leverage local and state funds to purchase expensive library services and products.

## **Proposal Two – Improve MSL service to Local libraries by restoring operations funds.**

We request that all operational funds be restored to MSL so that MSL can regain its excellence in providing its services.

1. Restore funding for clerical assistance in Library Develop Department. This department provides a variety of service to Montana libraries, including on-site and telephone consulting, providing education opportunities, managing joint projects for services and products, help in interpreting federal and state regulations and laws, and improving technology and other library services. The reduction of funds in FY 2004 and 05 caused the department to lose one FTE that provided clerical services to the Department. The position processed consulting requests, managed mailings, collected data from public libraries to meet federal requirements, and served as publication coordinator. The loss of this position has caused this tasks to be done by professional positions resulting in a of loss of productivity and increased costs to the state for clerical tasks as these professional are paid for the accomplishment of clerical tasks.

## **Proposal Three – Improve local libraries.**

1. Fund a modified FTE for the Statewide Technology Librarian's position currently established in the Library Development Department. This position works out of an office in the Great Falls Public Library and is a critical position for the State Library. This position meets the direct consulting needs for the 20 public libraries in the Great Falls and Glasgow areas, as well as the general consulting needs of the 180 other libraries in these areas. The Statewide technology Librarians help Montana's librarians provide better library services to all Montana citizens by helping them with their technology, planning, budgeting, administration, personnel, and all other questions. Existing staff without this modified FTE could not keep up with the consulting needs of the 770 libraries in Montana. The current position is paid by federal Library Services and Technology Act monies, moving this mission-critical positions to state funding would allow MSL to develop grant programs with federal funds to support and improve all of Montana's libraries. Funding requested is \$110,000 per biennium.
2. Fund a modified FTE for the Statewide Technology Librarian's position currently established in the Library Development Department at the Montana State Library. This position works out of a remote office in the Parmly Billings Public Library and is a critical position for the State Library. This position meets the direct consulting needs for the 26 public libraries in the Billings and Miles City areas, and the general consulting needs of the 243 multi-type libraries in these areas. The Statewide technology Librarians help Montana's librarians provide better library services to all Montana citizens by helping them with their technology, planning, budgeting, administration, personnel, and personnel questions.

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**Proposal Four – Restore NRIS/NHP Funding for Core services.**

1. We ask that NRIS/NHP funding be restored to the level of funding present in 2002. Funding for the combined program was reduced by \$37,500 for the 2004/2005 biennium, approximately half from the general fund and half from RIT funds. This cut significantly reduced the equipment budget for the program, at a time when our reliance on IT infrastructure to serve the needs of MSdL is growing. This cut also resulted in an increased reliance on contract funding, thus detracting from the time spent on core mission tasks.

**Proposal Five – Restore materials budget cuts.**

1. We ask that the materials budget be restored to the level of funding present in 2002. Funding for materials was cut \$44,152 in FY04 and \$44,152 in FY05 for a total biennium cut of \$88,304. Although the transition to digital services will reduce the need for the budget for print materials, there will be a corresponding increase in the need for licensing access to electronic databases, licensing search engine technology to improve information discovery, development of applications to automate manual processes (e.g. capturing electronic state documents), metadata development, implementing virtual reference services, and a need for additional web servers, database servers, and associated software, storage, and support services to serve digital library needs.