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Library Services and Construction Act: Reauthorization Technicals (1984-1985): Correspondence 03

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

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July 6, 1984

Eileen D. Cooke
Director
Washington Office
American Library Association
110 Maryland Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Ms. Cooke:

I wish to call your attention to what appears to be a serious contradiction between both H.R. 2878 and S. 2490 and Section 7 of the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) regarding Federal shares and State matching requirements for LSCA Title II.

H.R. 2878, Sec. 202(b) states "... the Federal share of the cost of construction of any project assisted under this title shall not exceed one-half of the total cost of such project." S. 2490, Sec. 202(b) states "... the Federal share of the cost of construction of any project assisted under this title shall not exceed one-third of the total cost of such project."

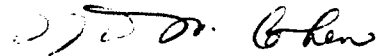
Sec. 7(b)(1) of the LSCA states that the Federal funds share for Titles I and II shall be between 33 percent and 66 percent of a State program. This requirement has been in effect since the enactment of the original Library Services Act. In order to obtain the Federal share, a State must match with State/local funds, based upon its percentage of per capita income as compared to all other States. This requirement permits States with lower incomes to match less than States with higher incomes and thereby enables the lower-income States to participate fully in the program. Sec. 7(b)(1) permits a State to match for the total Federal allotment under Titles I and II, rather than for each project. This requirement is particularly important for Title II projects in some States where many communities find it difficult to meet even current matching requirements.

The H.R. 2878 and S. 2490 Sections 202(b) contradict the requirements in Section 7 by limiting the percentage of Federal funds available for a Title II project. Further, Section 202(b) will prevent some lower-income States from participating fully in the Title II program because of the overall higher level of matching required for these States. The project-by-project limitation on Federal funds will also eliminate many poorer communities from participation.

Recent discussions with State librarians in some lower-income States in the normal course of my Title II advisory duties indicated negative reactions to Sec. 202 (b). The most frequent recommendation made was that Sec. 202(b) be deleted. We agree that this is the best way to resolve the problem and strongly recommend that Sec. 202(b) be deleted from H.R. 2878 and S. 2490.

Please let me know if you wish to discuss this matter.

Sincerely,



Nathan M. Cohen
LSCA Title II Coordinator