

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM COMMITTEE REPORT – 17

I have been monitoring the Patriot Act as it made its way through the House and Senate. In December I contacted both Senator Kent Conrad and Senator Byron Dorgan and urged them to vote no on passing the Patriot Act. Senator Conrad responded and did indeed vote no. A compromise version of the bill passed in late February. I did contact both senators again in February and urged them to consider the amendments put forth by Senator Russ Feinstein from Wisconsin. In the end they both voted for passage of the Patriot Act.

In December the American Library Association contacted the Intellectual Freedom Committee chairs from all 50 states. They are sponsoring Law for Librarians, which is a project of ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom. Law for Librarians is an intensive three-day session covering the legal basis of libraries' intellectual freedom principles.

Included in the training will be up-to-date information on state and federal statutes, pertinent case law, policy development and implementation, and good practices. There also will be a "train the trainer" portion of the seminar so that attendees may develop the skills to help implement similar trainings in their home states.

Law for Librarians was designed for the Intellectual Freedom Committee chairs from state library associations and representatives from state library agencies.

Funding for Law for Librarians is provided in part by a grant from the Ford Foundation.