

REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE
LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY

Submitted to the Subcommittee of the
Legislative Coordinating Committee

Linda F. Wallace, Director

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"THE TIME HAS COME," THE WALRUS SAID, " TO TALK OF
MANY THINGS...."

HISTORY

The Legislative Reference Library was established in 1969 as a non-partisan legislative service. By statute, the Library is required to collect and maintain materials of governmental and legislative interest and is permitted to prepare reports and studies. Since 1969, the Legislature has added to the Library's responsibility. Today LRL is responsible for maintaining and making available to the public the tapes of House and Senate committee proceedings and floor debates. (Rules) We have also been designated as recipient of 10 copies of all publications prepared by state government agencies and as such, we are required to publish monthly a list of publications received. (MS 3.195) In the future we will house and make available microfilm copies of all engrossments of bills since 1957. The bills are in the process of being filmed.

COLLECTION

The Legislative Reference Library attempts to acquire a timely mix of books, periodicals and pamphlets in all subject areas that are or may become of concern to lawmakers.

Currently, the Library houses some 14,000 books and pamphlets, including MSA, USCA and other legal, legislative and government publications. Each year the professional staff reviews the collection, discarding dated materials.

At present we receive 35 newspapers and 400 periodicals. These are also under constant review. Those that prove less useful are discontinued.

In addition to the traditional library materials, the Legislative Library maintains files of newspaper clippings arranged by classification number, personality or legislative district. We add four legal-size file cabinets of clippings each year. The collection dates from 1969 and is heavily used.

Since 1973, the rules committees of both houses of the legislature have made the Legislative Reference Library the custodian of the tapes of committee and floor debate. We are now holding approximately 2800 reels.

MINNESOTA DOCUMENTS

The Legislative Library is required by law (MS 3.195) to receive and retain 10 copies of all publications prepared by state agencies. Since enactment of this law we have received approximately 10,000 titles or 100,000 items. The number increases each year. In 1976, we anticipate receipt of 6,000 titles. There are two problems associated with this program. First, many agencies do not willingly comply. The Library expends much time as enforcer. The second problem area involves storage.

The Library has funds to microfilm these documents. The project would involve reproduction of these items on 4 x 6 microfiche cards. Fiche cards are easily stored, retrieved and can be reproduced either in kind or as paper copy. We are working closely with the Department of Administration to develop a system of indexing which would enable users to locate the desired items through author, title or subject. The documents department has expressed interest in using our system to supply state depositories (MS 16.58). Space savings would be immense. Presently, these documents are stored in 119, 16 x 12 x 10 boxes and 3 foot bookcases. Each year, at present growth rate, documents received under 3.195 require the addition or the equivalent of 12 bookcases. If they were reproduced and stored on fiche, the present collection plus the 1976 items would take up only two 4 x 6 sixteen inch file drawers. Library has equipment to read and reproduce fiche.

To facilitate acquisition of Minnesota documents the Library publishes a checklist of these documents. As of July 1, 1976, this Checklist will be sold to the public by Documents Division of the Department of Administration. The price which covers only handling will be \$15.00 per year. Production costs will continue to be born by the Library. Legislators and staff will continue to receive their copies free. At the time the Checklist is offered for sale, changes in format will be made which will enable the Library to produce the item more efficiently with savings both in personnel time and materials.

THE TECHNICAL PROCESSING UNIT

The Technical Processing Unit, an often under-rate element in the provision of quality library service, handles the acquisition, cataloging and classification of materials. The departure of the assistant director has necessitated a temporary reorganization of this unit. In reorganizing, we have centralized decision making and instituted uniformity in the performance of similar job routines. This is working so well, that we expect these changes to become permanent. Currently, the director is reviewing the individual work assignments in this unit, in order to determine whether jobs are being done by people classified and able to carry them out. This review is complicated by the fact that no job descriptions exist and no prior staff evaluation has taken place.

At this point in time, it seems likely that we will need an additional part-time clerk typist to support the technical service staff.

Again, scarcity of space hampers the operation of this unit.

REFERENCE SERVICE

The Legislative Reference Library reference unit should ideally attempt to anticipate the information needs of each legislator, staff and commission member and bring to their attention all materials which merit review. Realistically, at the present we have neither the staff nor the paths of communication to enable us to provide this type of individualized information screening service. Provision of such service is one of our goals.

Presently the reference unit provides excellent traditional service. Through the reference service unit the legislature has access not only to the information held in our collection, but also the materials and resources available throughout the metropolitan area, the state and the nation. Our staff is trained to respond to immediate needs for information or facts, and to less pressing needs of long term study materials or quotes for speeches. We pride ourselves in our versatility and flexibility.

Because we have no corresponding figures for past years we cannot tell if demand or use of our services have increased. We feel that there has been a substantial increase. Below you will find summarized results of the statistics we began to keep in March of this year. After we have accumulated these and tabulated them for a longer period of time trends should become evident.

From the beginning of March 1976 to the end of May 1976, we answered 1288 informational reference questions and 446 research type reference questions.* Of these, 768 questions were asked by Legislators, 458 questions were asked by the Research Staffs, 129 questions were asked by Interns and 379 questions were asked by other State Agencies or the general public. For a detailed breakdown, see the attached appendix.

*Questions are differentiated by the length of time taken to respond. Informational questions take less than 5 minutes, Research questions more than 5 minutes take less than twenty minutes.

USE

From July 1, 1975 to June 21, 1976, we circulated approximately 386 items each month. Of these, 304 items were available directly from our library collection, while 82 items were obtained through the Minnesota Inter-library Telecommunications Exchange (Minitex),* our principal source of interlibrary loan material.

We can not determine for certain whether or not the total circulation figure for the library has increased, since statistics have not been kept for previous years. However, it is evident that the Minitex figure has. During the period July 1, 1974 to June 30, 1975 total requests numbered 633; by contrast, during the period July 1, 1975 to June 21, 1976 the total requests numbered 981. This represents an increase of 248 requested items.

More detailed reports on circulation statistics, including Minitex, are available from the Library.

This last year the reference staff initiated a current contents service. Each month contents pages of journals selected by our reference librarian were forwarded to committee chairmen. The chair or his aid selected titles of articles from these lists. The Library has these titles copied and forwarded. Recently, we have offered this service on an expanded and individualized basis. Research and other staff members have let the Library know what periodical contents pages they would like to see on a regular basis. Response to the offer of this service has been excellent.

For over a year it has been evident to the Library staff that the legislators and research staffs housed in the State Office Building do not make as much use of the Library as they once did. Seventy-five to eighty percent of our users, during the interim and more during the session are housed in the State Office Building, yet this population accounts for less than thirty-three percent of library use. (1) The Library staff feels that legislators and staff housed in the State Office Building would make more use of the Library and would be better served if the Library has an auxiliary reading room in that building. The research units support this proposal.

* This figure is approximate because circulation statistics were not kept for the entire period. Minitex statistics were kept for the entire period. Also, the majority of the items requested from Minitex were photocopies of magazine articles.

The Reference service unit, like the Technical unit, is hampered by insufficient space. As a consequence of crowding, noise is a problem in the reading room. The confidentiality of the exchange between the librarian and patron cannot be assured under present conditions, and materials are often difficult to locate and retrieve.

As with the Technical unit, I am reviewing the Reference services in order to assess service and efficiency to see if and where improvement can be made. I have just begun this review. Recommendations are several months away.

INFORMATION BROCHURES AND PUBLICATIONS

Finally, the Technical services unit in cooperation with the Reference service unit has published, as an aid to the Library users, a listing of recent acquisitions. This publication used to be called The Library Star, and was issued irregularly throughout the year. With the July issue the name will become LRL Resources and the publication will be issued regularly each month.

Early this spring the Library put together an information brochure describing collection and service. This publication will be made available to all legislators and staff prior to the opening of the 1977 Session. This is part of our effort to reach out to potential users and to develop services which suit their specific needs.

Next month we will begin to compile a descriptive listing of information resources available in the various capitol area agencies to be entitled "A Manual of Informal Information Resources". We hope the knowledge of what resources are available from the various state agencies will help us serve you better.

The Library also prepares bibliographies at the request of individuals or groups.

INFORMATION SCREENING

The Director has, during the spring of this year, been consulting with the various research staffs in an attempt to evolve a collection and service policy which reflects their needs and those of the legislature.

Much of what the Library does and how well it does depends on communication between and input from various user groups. To this end, we would like to see the establishment of a library advisory committee composed of members of the legislature or their designees, and members of the research staffs. This group could meet regularly to discuss and make recommendations regarding additions to the collection, hours and services, and also

to evaluate programs. We believe this would make the Library more responsive to user needs. I would also like to see directors of other information-providing units serving state legislators participate in these meetings from time to time.

Proliferation of small office book and periodical collections within the legislature, itself, is an area in which the Legislative Reference Library, as your information center, feels some responsibility. These collections are often duplications of holdings. Thus, perhaps these represent unnecessary duplicate expenditures. They are of little use beyond the immediate office staff because few people know of their existence. We realize the importance of these on the spot collections, but we believe that they can to a limited degree be shared. Therefore, we would like to locate and list these holdings; and in the future, we would like to have the Library order these materials for the offices. When received, the material would be cataloged like other library holdings and charged out on a permanent loan to the office which initiated the order. Hopefully, these collections would then be available to others for on the spot review, and materials would not be purchased in duplicate unless quality guaranteed multiple copies.

COMPUTER SERVICES

At present, we can provide ERIC and NTIS searches through an agreement with the University of Minnesota. The procedure is slow and cumbersome. Shortly we will have access to the Lockheed data bases through the Library of the Department of Education and currently, on a short-term experimental basis, we have access to a limited number of SDC data bases through the Highway Department Library. In the future, we feel the Library should look toward the addition of computerized data base services. These services would allow the Library to obtain current listings of relevant material with terrific speed. Services now available include CIS.

STAFF

In February of this year I was appointed Director and Steve Plumb was appointed Assistant Director. Mr. Plumb has resigned, effective July 1, 1976, at which time the staff will consist of two professional librarians, the director and the reference librarian, an assistant for Minnesota Documents, four technicians, one full-time and three part-time clerks and an accountant. Only one of these part-time clerks is a typist. In order to minimize the disruption which will result from the loss of the Assistant Director, as of July 1, there will be temporary reassignments of supervisory tasks.

On the whole I have found the staff willing and able. I can say that with few reservations I am satisfied with performance. I am not, however, satisfied with the structure of operations. Once the new Assistant Director has been hired, I plan with the input of the staff to reorganize the Library. Hopefully, the development of a clearer structure will result in a better use of staff time and better utilization of individual abilities.

The Legislative Library has never had a procedure for personnel evaluation. This June, I have initiated a semiannual personnel review. The purpose of these meetings between the director and individual staff members will be to discuss work load and to establish individualized priorities and measurement criteria.

In the near future, LRL will need to add at least one clerical employee, since too much of our technicians time is taken up with the performance of routine clerical tasks.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Director:

addressed several library meetings and one health planning conference participated as a panelist at the Metropolitan Area Library Semiannual meeting

belongs to and is active in the Legislative Reference Librarians section of the Special Libraries Association

attended Special Libraries Association, Denver in June
participates actively in the Capitol Area Librarians Council
participates in the Twin Cities chapter of Special Libraries Association
attends on occasion meeting of the local chapter of National
Micrographics Association

Reference Librarian:

attended Minnesota chapter of American Library Association semi-
annual meeting - Twin Cities, October and February
chaired MLA's Special Libraries round table
participates in Minnesota Library Association

Assistant for State Documents:

attended National Conference of State Legislatures Annual Conference -
Philadelphia, August

Director, accountant and a technician attended Capitol Area Librarians Council's
workshop on planning and budgeting - St. Paul, May

Technicians:

attended Minnesota Library Association workshop on technical process-
ing - St. Paul, May
attended workshop sponsored by the American Association of Records
Managers and Administrators - Minneapolis, March
completed a state training program entitled "Data Processing
Concepts"

FACILITIES

The Library's main reading room is located in 111 State Capitol. Off
of this small room is an alcove which houses our legal collection. On
this side of the north entrance to the Capitol the Library also has two
offices. Across the hallway from these rooms are three other small

offices. All library offices also contain parts of the library collection either in file cabinets or 3 x 7 foot shelves. The Library has another office area in the basement and two small storage rooms. All the basement rooms have environmental problems. Two flood, two are extremely hot and dirty and all three are rodent infested. As early as 1969 the librarian was requesting more space for materials. I echo his request. We need more room to house our collection, we need more space so that we may more efficiently carry out the operation necessary to run the library and we need more space so that our patron can make more satisfactory use of our services and materials.

We have the use of 107. We house the House of Representatives floor debates and committee hearings tapes and current Minnesota publications in card board boxes in this room.

Attached you will find a sheet giving the dimensions of our space.

ROOM MEASUREMENTS

First Floor

Rm. 111 (hallway) - 14' x 5'
Rm. 111A - 14' x 14'
Rm. 111B (Reading Room) - 17'10" x 14'2 1/2"
Rm. 111C (Inner Reading Room - Law Room) - 15 1/2' x 12'1 1/2"
Rm. 111D (112A) - 13' x 11'
Rm. 112B - 1t 1/2' x 10'
Rm. 107 - 46' x 35 1/2'
Rm. 107A - 15 1/2' x 9'
Rm. 107B - 12' x 5'
Rm. 107C (110C) - 14 1/2' x 10'
Rm. 107D (110E) - 12' x 11'
Rm. 110D - 13 1/2' x 12'

Basement

Rm. B40 - 31 1/2' x 13 1/2'
Rm. B40A - 25' x 13'
Rm. B41B - (1) 16' x 10 1/2'
 (2) 13' x 5'
 (3) 21' x 18'
Rm. B60C - 37' x 13 1/2'

F.Y. 76 & 77

Ballance as of 3/31/76	\$266,584.64
\$13,500 salaries per mo.	<u>-240,000.00</u>
2,500 expenses per mo.	
<u>\$16,000</u>	
x 15 mo.	
<u>\$240,000</u>	\$ 26,584.64

Proposed expenses:

Microfilm Project	10,000.00	
Summer Part-Time Help	2,500.00	
Booklet-1 mo. @ 6/hr	1,050.00	
July 4% raises	3,240.00	
Jan 4% raises + grid	<u>3,600.00</u>	
		<u>20,390.99</u>
		<u>\$ 6,194.64</u> balance

(Library will be reimbursed approx. \$4,000.00 for acct. services)

CONCLUSION

In summary the problem which hampers all aspects of service -- provision of confidential communication between librarian and patron, the efficiency of library operation, and the storage and retrieval of materials -- is lack of space.

We will continue to provide service equal in quality to that which we have provided in the past and to look for new ways to serve the information needs of the legislature. But institution of new and better services is dependent on our acquisition of a larger and more suitable quarters.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY
 (Legislative Coordinating Commission)
 Financial Report
 July 1, 1975 through February 15, 1976

Appropriation\$385,000.00
 (Laws of 1975, Chapt. 204, Sec. 2, Subd. 3a)

DISBURSEMENTS:

Salaries: Full-Time	\$64,577.61	
Part-Time	<u>6,843.68</u>	
		\$71,421.29
Social Security & Retirement Contrib.		7,511.61
Insurance (Employees Group)		1,806.70
Books		1,256.37
Furniture		749.95
Repairs & Maintenance		117.90
Office Supplies		1,392.14
Postage		-0-
Printing		2,280.25
Subscriptions		5,296.22
Employee Travel		469.80
Telephone		705.28*
Xerox		2,782.12
Misc. (water, ss revolving fund)		<u>92.27</u>
		<u>95,881.90</u>
Balance as of February 15, 1976.....		<u><u>\$289,118.10</u></u>

*We have paid out \$163.03 for the Office of Legislative Research to cover their phone bills.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY
(Legislative Coordinating Commission)

Financial Report

July 1, 1975 through June 30, 1976

Appropriation.....\$385,000.00
(Laws of 1975, Chap. 204, sec. 2, Subd. 3a)

DISBURSEMENTS:

Salaries:	Full-time	112,278.87	
	Part-time	<u>3,510.13</u>	
			115,789.00
Social Security & Ret.		13,162.63	
Employee Insurance		<u>3,037.90</u>	
			16,200.53
Books			2,122.62
Furniture			1,489.95
Repairs			286.63
Supplies			2,129.04
Postage			98.00
Printing			4,507.11
Subscriptions			6,430.29
Employee Travel			906.80
Telephone			1,162.50
Xerox			4,071.42
Miscellaneous			256.94
Est. bills for June			2,385.83
Microfilming Project (Set aside as Project has not been started yet)		<u>10,000.00</u>	<u>167,836.66</u>
Est. Balance as of June 30, 1976.....			<u>\$217,163.34</u>