SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
EXHIBIT NO. 2
DATE 3.4.09
BILL NO. HB61

March 4, 2009

Chairman Esp, members of the Committee for the record my name is Darlene Staffeldt (S t a f f e l d t) and I am your State Librarian.

I am here today on behalf of the Montana State Library Commission to ask you to support HB 61. I want to thank Representative Sesso for his willingness to carry this piece of Legislation for us. The State Library Commission has directed me to move forward legislative revisions to the Information Access Montana statute as recommended by two of our statewide advisory groups (the Fulfillment Task Force and the Network Advisory Council).

Providing the best possible library services to all Montana citizens has always required Montana libraries to share their resources. Since 1989, when the Montana State Legislature first passed The Information Access Montana Act, many additional methods for sharing Montana's library resources have emerged. The Commission is asking for statute changes so that they have the flexibility to make current monies available for alternative resource sharing methods.

We are proposing to amend four sections of existing Montana library statues.

In Section 1 (MCA 22-1-301) we want to clarify the definition of public library in Montana by including public libraries established under Title 22 and Title 7. Although most Montana public libraries are established under title 22, we have a handful that were established under title 7 and we want to make sure that they can legally be included in our services and efforts.

In Section 2 (MCA 22-1-328) we propose a change to the interlibrary loan reimbursement program language that would establish a statewide interlibrary resource-sharing program. This would allow the Commission to administer funds appropriated by the legislature to support and facilitate a broader scope of resource-sharing options among libraries in Montana. Types of resource sharing options that could be consider but not limited to would include interlibrary loan reimbursement, shared catalogs, statewide bibliographic databases, cooperative collection development, courier or delivery services

In Section 3 (MCA 22-1-329) we propose to change the state multilibrary card program to a statewide library access program. This would allow the creation of a voluntary statewide library access program whereby a participating library <u>may</u> allow direct access to the library's materials and services by users from another libraries' service area population.

Section 4 (MCA 22-1-330) changes the titles of the programs for which the State Library Commission would retain rule making authority.

After the 2007 session when we realized that we did not necessarily have the support from our library community to make these statute changes, I established a 14 member Fulfillment Task Force of Librarians from across the state to study the issues and make recommendations for solutions and/or enhancements. The Task Force materials can be found on our website under the heading about MSL(at:
http://www.msl.mt.gov/About_MSL/fulfillment_task_force/fulfillment_tf.asp)
The Task Force worked for a little over a year from June 2007 until July 2008. Their recommendations were passed on to the Network Advisory Council and finally the State Library Commission.

Public input was formally requested three times during the Fulfillment Task study year, and then again three times since as the Commission made it's decision to move forward on the legislative changes. My staff and I traveled the state to meet with librarians and library trustees to further consider their input. Finally, in October, A formal online web survey was taken and although we still do not have 100% support of the legislative changes, we do have over 90% support. For some Montana libraries the current system is not broken and they do not see the bigger picture of how having more options can provide better library services for all Montanans, but the majority of Montana's librarians recognize the value in having the flexibility that the legislative changes will provide.

I request that this Committee support HB 61. I want to thank the Committee for their time today, as well as their efforts through the years for Montana's libraries and their users.

I would be glad to respond to any questions if you have any at any time.

Thank you

Written copy of Testimony presented to Senate Local Government Committee, Wednesday, March 4, 2009

From: Darlene Staffeldt
State Librarian
406-444-3116