



Montana Library Association

From the Mountains to the Prairies

MLA BOARD REPORTS

Office held/Chair of: Government Affairs

Reported By: John Finn

Date: March 2017

Progress or Successes since Our Last Meeting:

The Library Legislative Day reception was a big success. We will end up printing nearly 100 READ posters for Legislators and their libraries. Between donations and MLA budgeted funds we raised just over \$5,000 to cover expenses for the event. After the photographer is paid and the READ posters are printed, we are going to be very close on budget. I will report more on that in Billings.

HB261 was heard in the House Appropriations Committee on January 24. The Committee took executive action on January 30 and passed it out of Committee with a unanimous 22-0 vote. It received a 91-7 floor vote on Third Reading on February 2. HB 261 then moved to the Senate Finance and Claims Committee and had its hearing on February 9. No action has been taken since that date. We have every hope that it moves soon.

MLA's Legislative agenda continues to be:

1. Supporting and passing Per Capita/Per Square Mile State Aid
2. Supporting the state library's budget, backfilling, and making it fully funded as well as supporting the state library in the exercise of its full budget authority.
3. Track, inform, and react as needed to all non-budgetary bills that may pop up during the session, taking special care about bills that concern: Coal funding / broadband / filtering / censorship / privacy / intellectual freedom / tax levy sunsets / school librarians / library districts.

I was pleased to learn that our nomination of Representative Frank Garner for Library Champion award was accepted by the Awards and Honors Committee. Representative Garner is thrilled and honored to be awarded in such a way. He looks forward to the Award Ceremony and hopes that the Legislative Session is quiet that day. Jane Lopp, Imagine IF Board member will introduce Frank at the ceremony.

New Issues:

I sent an email last week about MLA supporting a preschool/early education bill; Nanette is acting on the Board's desire for us to support it.

Board Action Requested:

None at this time.