

Talking Points
Library Listening Session
July 24, 2004 Brookfield Public Library 9:00 A.M. – Noon
Waukesha County Federated Library System
262/896.8080 www.wcfls.lib.wi.us

1. Publicly Funded Free and Open Access to Library Materials

What is your position regarding the 132-year fundamental principle of publicly funded free and open access to library materials to all Wisconsin citizens?

Background In 1872 the State of Wisconsin adopted a Statute providing that public library service shall be free to the inhabitants of those communities that establish and maintain them.

Denying free access to public library collections would be undermining the very foundations of our democracy by denying access to people who cannot afford to pay a fee.

Additional information www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/resolution.htm

2. Restore the State's Fair Share of Support to Public Libraries

Do you support compliance with §43.24(6) of the Wisconsin State Statutes, which requires a request for funding for public library systems at 13% of local library expenditures?

Background Public library systems have been in existence for 30 years. Since their inception, the people of Wisconsin have benefited from a far-sighted program of regional cooperation among local libraries. These shared services include computer systems, delivery of materials, subscription to online databases, staff training and development, and more.

In 1997, the Legislative Study Council on Public Libraries reviewed this issue and determined that the 13% funding was necessary to make library systems strong and vital partners in the delivery of library services to Wisconsin residents. Currently, funding has eroded to less than 9%. Library systems are now left without adequate resources to carry out the mission for whom they were created.

Additional information www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/systemaids.htm

3. Maintain the Common School Fund Income for School Libraries

Do you support the use of the full amount of the Common School Fund income for its original purpose, namely "the purchase of library books and other instructional materials for school libraries" [Wis. Stat. § 43.70(3)]?

Background The Common School Fund Library Aid is an annual entitlement program that distributes the interest earned on loans made from the Common School Fund, a state trust fund set up by the Wisconsin Constitution.

During 2001, the Wisconsin Statutes were amended to include "... All moneys distributed under this section shall be expended for the purchase of instructional materials from the state historical society for use in teaching Wisconsin history and for the purchase of library books and other instructional materials for school libraries." This language is confusing and doesn't reflect the original intent of §43.70(3).

Additional information www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/csf.htm

4. Funding for UW-System libraries

Do you support the vital importance of maintaining the specialized information resources of UW-System libraries?

Background UW-System libraries are facing dwindling resources to meet the information needs of the citizens of Waukesha County and Wisconsin. Crucial to the university's instructional and research missions, they are also important resources for Wisconsin businesses, government agencies, K-12 students and teachers, private colleges and universities and citizens. Each year over 60,000 documents are loaned to business, industry, and hospitals.

The 1999-2001 biennial budget was the last time the UW library system was able to obtain additional funding for collections. As a result, the UW libraries' ability to meet the needs of students, faculty, and other customers through local collections has been seriously eroded. Last year Governor Doyle signed a \$250 million cut to the UW System while authorizing tuition increases resulting in the loss of 650 positions over two years.

Additional information www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/UWSystem.htm

5. Do you have any suggestions on how to increase funding for libraries in Waukesha County?