

PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE DEMONSTRATION BILL

By MARJORIE BEAL

The Public Library Service Demonstration Bill has been reintroduced in both houses of Congress. Senator Lister Hill of Alabama and Senator George D. Aiken of Vermont introduced the bill in the Senate on January 6, 1947. It is numbered S. 48 and has been referred to the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Nine of the thirteen members of the new Senate Committee supported the bill last year. Hearings have been scheduled for May 16, by the sub-committee on Education.

Congressman Thomas A. Jenkins of Ohio, influenced by library conditions in his home county, introduced on March 10, 1947, an identical bill in the House of Representatives. It is H. R. 2465. Chairman McKeown of the Committee on Education and Labor has referred the bill to a sub-committee on which Honorable Graham A. Barden of New Bern is the only Southern member.

THE ACT PROVIDES:

1. \$25,000 per year for five years to set up in each State rural library demonstrations. There is no danger

of federal control. Demonstrations would work like this:

- a. Federal funds to be used in areas without public library service, or in areas with limited library service.
 - b. Areas to comprise one or more counties.
 - c. Demonstration periods to extend for two or more years.
 - d. The area to promise to support the service by local, county, and state funds at the termination of the demonstration.
2. An additional \$25,000 to \$75,000 for each of the five years. The 1947 North Carolina General Assembly appropriated money which can be used to match such federal allocations.

To secure committee hearings and the passage of the bill, the North Carolina Congressmen need your expressions of approval, your requests for copies of the bills, and your reasons why North Carolina is concerned and needs this help.

Write to Senators Clyde R. Hoey and William Umstead, Senate Office Building; Hon. Graham A. Barden, House Office Building; and to the Congressman from your district.

North Carolina has benefited from three demonstrations of public library service: (1) The Julius Rosenwald Fund demonstration helped in Davidson and Mecklenburg Counties; (2) the WPA Library Program with books, bookmobiles, and trained supervision; (3) the TVA Library Program in the six Western counties. All these demonstrations have set up standards of service, have provided books and extension of services. Three hundred thousand North Carolinians still live in areas with no public library service!

When the Commissioner of Education approves the plan submitted by

NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES

the North Carolina Library Commission the money would be allocated beginning the July 1st following the passage of the act.

These questions have been asked:

1. What chance for a library demonstration would _____ County have? The demonstration area might be in any section of the state where there is (a) an expressed desire for more books and improved service, (b) a willingness to cooperate and to take advantage of the opportunities.
2. What will the demonstration offer?
 - a. Books of all types according to the reading ability and reading desires.
 - b. A bookmobile to distribute books in all parts of the area.
 - c. A trained, qualified, experienced librarian to direct the service, to order books and to see that the people know and enjoy good books.
3. What will it cost a county?

Federal funds would supplement county, state, and local funds. Population, area to be served, wealth and the available book stock will determine the cost of service.

Mr. Hoyt Galvin, Director of the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, is the North Carolina Coordinator of the Federal Relations Committee. Let him know your questions and send him any comments from the Congressmen.

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