

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A  
LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY

Report prepared for the Legislative Library  
Subcommittee of the Senate and House Rules  
Committees.

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## INTRODUCTION

That the Minnesota Legislature has been able to operate for such a long period of time without a reference library is a tribute to the ingenuity of its members. However, dissatisfaction and frustration with the lack of such a facility appear to have caught up with them. This was reflected in the results of a survey conducted by the Citizens League among members of the 1967 legislature. (Citizens League News, v.XVI, no. 8, p.1, 30 April 1967.) A majority of legislators indicated an interest in better research-- apparently because ". . .they do not now have time to background themselves before voting in committee." The survey also reflected some dissatisfaction among legislators towards the Legislative Research Committee (LRC) and a desire for a better research facility.

H. Rupert Theobald, Chief, Legislative Reference Bureau, Madison, Wisconsin, made some observations on legislative libraries that bear repeating. Space is of utmost importance and the collection should be in close proximity to the legislature. The real value of a reference library is having research analysts to do spot research. They can also advise the in-depth research personnel on materials available. Copying equipment is a necessity in any legislative library. The library should not be merely an intermediary to other sources of information. It must be able to provide statistical data and other services first hand.

Legislators should be advised that during the first three or four months, when the library is ordering and cataloging its materials, its use will be limited until control over the materials is achieved. The library service will become more effective with the passage of time and the addition of a research analyst to the staff after the initial three or four

month settling period.

PRESENT INFORMATION SOURCES AVAILABLE TO LEGISLATORS

Legislative Research Committee (LRC), Research Department

LRC was established in 1947 with the ". . .power and right to study, consider, accumulate, compile and assemble information on any subject upon which the legislature may legislate, and upon such subjects as the legislature may by concurrent or joint resolution authorize or direct, or upon any subject requested by a member of the legislature; to collect information concerning the government and general welfare of the state and of its political subdivisions; to study and consider the important issues of public policy and questions of general interest. The prime motive of the committee shall be to gather information and provide material to be used by the legislature in its work while in session." (Minnesota Statutes 1965 section 3.32.)

The law establishing the LRC does not specifically state that the Research Department was to set up a reference library, although in broad terms the collection of materials may imply a library of undefined scope. As a result, a library of undefined scope is what exists at this time. The Director of Research requests materials, as they are needed, from the Council of State Government and other sources. Most materials are received on an exchange basis.

Storage facilities consist of ten file cabinets and approximately 25 feet of shelf space. Arrangement of the materials is under broad headings, thus making it difficult to get at specific items. There is no classification system with a card catalog for determining what is available in the collection. The newest research assistant in the office is put in charge of the collection. This is done to make him familiar with what is available. Anyone in the

office is said to be able to service the collection when questions are presented to them. Materials are filed into and discarded from the collection on a time available basis.

The LRC collection of resource materials is handled in an unorthodox manner, but it must be reiterated that the law never required that LRC run a library.

#### Revisor of Statutes

Drafting of bills is the primary service of this office. Reference materials are acquired by the revisor's office for use in drafting new bills. Materials received by LRC from the Council of State Governments are often consulted. Mr. Bright, the Revisor of Statutes, envisions a legislative library as a compiler of materials that can be used by legislators and research people to compose reports to substantiate the need for laws on a specific topic.

#### State Law Library

This library has been referred to as one of the largest state law libraries in the country. (Phillip Monypenny, *The Library Functions of the State*, ALA, Chicago, 1966, pp. 107-108.) The law library is a partial depository for government publications. It is also a depository for publications of the Council of State Governments, and it receives materials on a selective basis by means of exchange with other states.

Mrs. Andrews, head of the Law Library, feels that a Legislative Reference Library would be very useful to the legislators as a part of the law library, but space is not available at the present time. There will be an added inconvenience to legislators, when the library is moved into different quarters as is being discussed.

### Department of Education, Public Libraries

This service was formerly housed in the state office building, at which time it received a fair amount of use from legislators according to Hannis Smith, Director. The collection contains reference materials that are of use to legislators, but present location of the facility makes it inconvenient. Mr. Smith has been active in drawing up standards for state library facilities for the American Library Association. He stated that there are 17 state service agencies in the library area. He feels that an experienced individual should be brought in from the outside to study the various library facilities and make recommendations for an overall solution to the present situation in which each library seems too often to operate unaware of what the others are doing. Mr. Smith foresees a union catalog and unified acquisitions and cataloging as a needed development of the future.

### Archives and Record Center

Under Dr. Franklin Burch, this facility has the responsibility of managing the entire state, county and municipal records. It provides reference service to other state agencies from non-current records housed there. There is little use of the materials by legislators because they generally have need of more recent or current information.

### Department of Administration, Documents Section

The primary purpose of documents section is to serve as a publishing house for the state. It does not attempt to keep copies of materials published on file. This is the responsibility of such agencies as the Historical Society and State Law Library. Some legislators use this office to buy publications of interest on legislation they may be authoring.

### Historical Society

The Historical Society is little used by the legislators simply because it does not contain the type of information of use to them.

### Departmental Libraries, e.g. Corrections, Public Welfare, Conservation, Highways, Health

The departmental libraries exist to serve their own staffs. Those libraries having regular librarians responsible for their collection seem to get the most use and are of the greatest value to their staffs. The converse may also be said to be true, i.e., libraries run on a part-time basis by someone in the office appear little used and of less value to the staff. Some of the librarians would be happy to serve the legislators if asked, but at the present time the facilities appear to be unknown to the legislators.

### ORGANIZATION OF THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY

The library facility should be responsible to a joint legislative committee. The committee can make known the desires of the legislators to the head of the library. The head of the library with the aid of the committee would establish policy and pass on budget requests or any problems that may arise.

The general function of the Legislative Reference Library should be to acquire current statistical and factual information for use by the legislators and research personnel. The type of materials collected will consist of reports and studies from other states and the federal government; news clippings from state and national newspapers and journals on topics of legislative interest; reference books; and serial publications dealing with current topics of interest to the legislature. The library should also.

engage in spot research, utilizing the resources in its collection to provide topical survey reports for the legislators.

It appears probable that much of the material currently housed in the vault under control of the Research Department of LRC is infrequently consulted. This is not a reflection on its worth but rather the lack of organization and control over the materials. (Control in library terminology refers to the ability to locate materials in your possession as well as the more obvious function implied by the term.) LRC lacks space to add to its collection; therefore, when new materials come in, something must be discarded in a somewhat arbitrary manner. By the nature of its research work, the Research Department of LRC generally has no need to keep the material acquired for a specific research topic. However, the information undoubtedly will have future use to others. For this reason, the material should be turned over to the Legislative Reference Library for sorting and cataloging. Under the controlled conditions of the library it becomes available for future use. This procedure should provide the Research Department of LRC with welcome relief from space problems, and the material would remain available to them if needed.

According to current discussion, the State Law Library will be moving from the capitol building within the next six years. Prior to the move, use can be made of such reference works as the U. S. Census and the Minnesota Statutes. When it is moved from the capitol, however, the Legislative Reference Library may need to consider purchasing its own copies of such materials.

The state documents office under the Department of Administration will place the Legislative Reference Library on its list of depositories if requested to do so. Such a formal request will need to be made.

There is a pressing need for spot research. This type of research can be readily carried on within the Legislative Reference Library. For this reason, a type of research personnel with a masters degree in political science and a demonstrated ability to do research would be a part of the library staff. In-depth and long-range research is perhaps better carried out by persons retained by the various legislative committees to study specific issues. On the other hand, the spot research is a service that would be available to any legislator and would most logically be a part of the library's service.

The revisor of statutes office receives requests from legislators that a bill be drawn up on a given topic. Often times a legislator has not had access to information to permit him to outline what he feels the law should cover, or what has been done in other states. This has necessitated the existence of reference materials in the revisor's office in order for the staff to do the research to meet the legislator's request for a bill.

The work carried on in the office of the revisor of statutes, the research department of LRC and the Legislative Reference Library is of such a nature that they have need of common resources. To make optimum use of the materials available and minimize the unnecessary duplication of materials and wasted space and expense which this duplication brings about, these three services should operate within a common area of offices. Secretarial services could be pooled and much of the materials required by each of the agencies would be readily available to each, as well as to the legislators.

The Legislative Reference Library personnel will need to maintain an awareness of information available to them in departmental libraries around the capitol, Public Administration and League of Municipalities library, Hill Reference library, University of Minnesota library and other collections within the metropolitan area.

## The staffing of the Legislative Reference Library

A chief librarian who will work with a joint legislative committee in drawing up the scope of the library collection and establish policy regarding library usage. He will be responsible for planning the acquisition of materials; hiring and supervising the staff needed to arrange the materials in such a manner that they are readily accessible and usable. (List of more specific responsibilities for this position and the ones that follow will be found in the appendix.)

It will be necessary to have an experienced professional catalog librarian to draw up a classification scheme for the collection. It is possible that this could be done by retaining a specialist for that purpose alone and keeping him/her on long enough to train a less experienced cataloger. However, it seems preferable to stay with one person. The importance of the classification scheme lies in the fact that if it is not usable the entire collection becomes a task to use, and may, in fact, become a hindrance rather than an aid.

The clerk typist position is one that is necessary to take the load of minor but necessary work off the professional staff. The duties would include clipping and mounting of newspaper articles marked by the staff, as well as typing and other clerical duties.

The above three individuals would be necessary to begin the operation of the library. Once the operation is under way, with the basic collection received and cataloged (ca. 3-4 months), it will then be possible to hire a research analyst and library assistant and begin providing a more active service to the legislators.

The research analyst would engage primarily in spot research on topics specifically requested by legislators, or such topics which are of anticipated

interest and importance.

The materials in the collection will oftentimes be of irreplaceable nature. For this reason some of it will have to be used within the library. A policy on this will have to be established by the head of the library and the joint legislative committee. A convenient way around this problem is a copying device such as a Xerox machine. In fact, it is hard to envision such a library without a copying machine of some sort.

Space needs for the library have been computed according to formulas established by the American Library Association which has done considerable research on the subject. The figures cover the space needs for materials, equipment and staff.

The equipment needs, for the most part, are simply those basic to any library, e.g., shelving, card catalogs, etc. One important consideration in the handling of library materials is the desire to maintain them in usable form for as long as needed. Metal boxes for holding the vast amount of ephemeral material which will make up the collection, is one sure way of prolonging the life of the materials. To purchase such boxes made to order by a commercial firm can be very expensive. It would be worth investigating the possibility of having them made to order by the inmates of one of the state institutions.

#### RECOMMEND THAT

1. One thousand square feet of floor space be made available for a Legislative Reference Library, with a progressive expansion to twice that amount within six years.
- \*2. \$51,475 be authorized for the initial establishment of the Legislative Reference Library. (1 July 1968 - 30 June 1969)
3. \$45,525 + salary increases be made available in succeeding years for the library.

4. A minimum of three persons be hired to set up the Legislative Reference Library - head, catalog librarian, and clerk typist. When the library becomes operational (ca. 3-4 months), the staff should be increased to include a research analyst and library assistant.
  5. The Legislative Reference Library be responsible for spot research.
  6. The offices of Research Department of LRC, Revisor of Statutes and the Legislative Reference Library be combined under a joint legislative committee, but permitted to maintain an individual identity while occupying a common area of offices in close proximity to the legislature.
  7. The research materials now held by the Research Department of LRC be transferred to the Legislative Reference Library for processing and cataloging.
  8. The reference materials held by the Revisor of Statute office be reviewed for transfer to the Legislative Reference Library.
  9. The Legislative Reference Library be made the recipient of all materials published and distributed by the Council of State Governments.
  10. The Legislative Reference Library be made a depository for state documents.
  11. Basic reference materials listed in the appendix be purchased and/or subscribed to for the Legislative Reference Library.
- \* Add \$6,550 if initial staff is hired by 1 April, 1968.

#### SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

1. Provide recommended space.
2. Hire head of library (by 1 April 1968).
3. Order equipment.
4. Hire catalog librarian and clerk typist.
5. Order basic materials, place subscriptions and set up exchanges.

6. Transfer and catalog LRC collection.
7. Transfer and catalog Revisor of Statutes collection.
8. Hire research and analyst and library assistant (by 1 July 1968).

APPENDIX I.

STAFFING

Chief, Legislative Reference Library

Responsibilities:

1. Define scope of collection in cooperation with a joint legislative committee.
2. Plan the acquisition of materials and guide the development of the collection.
3. Identify points of legislative interest and acquire materials in those areas.
4. Respond to the needs of the legislature through imaginative innovations and procedure.
5. Hire and supervise a library staff to assist in carrying out the work of the Legislative Reference Library.
6. Prepare budget proposals and growth studies for space needs.
7. Maintain current knowledgeability of trends and improvements in legislative reference work.
8. Select materials to be added to the collection through review of bibliographic listings.

Background requirements:

- a. Masters degree in library science.
- b. Background in political science.
- c. Minimum of 4-5 years experience in library work.
- d. Experience in supervision and administration.
- e. Interest in staying in the position for an extended period of time.  
(7 years)

f. Ability to work in a confidential manner with legislators.

Recommended salary - \$13,000.

Research analyst

Responsibilities:

1. Implement overall program of the library as defined by the chief and the joint legislative committee.
2. Maintain statistical records of activities carried on in the library to facilitate future planning and improvement of services.
3. Select materials for acquisitions.
4. Prepare spot research reports on topics of current interest to the legislature.
5. Assist legislative research personnel in locating materials they need.
6. Remain up to date on current topics.
7. Review and route incoming materials.
8. Assist legislators seeking information.

Background requirements:

- a. Masters degree in political science.
- b. Demonstrate ability to do research, i.e., masters thesis.
- c. Experience in supervisory capacity.
- d. Ability to work in a confidential manner with legislators.
- e. Knowledge of library procedures.

Recommended salary - \$9,000.

Catalog Librarian

Responsibilities:

1. Draw up classification scheme and subject headings.
2. Catalog all incoming materials.

3. Supervise preparation of continuations by an assistant.
4. Select materials for the collection.
5. Maintain active interest in topics of current importance.
6. Assist legislators seeking information.
7. Prepare materials for binding.
8. Maintain files in good working condition.

Background requirements:

- a. Masters degree in library science.
- b. Experience in cataloging of government documents, pamphlets and public administration type of materials.
- c. Ability to work in a confidential manner with legislators.

Recommended salary - \$9,000.

Library Assistant

Responsibilities:

1. Process continuations (material that supplements or replaces material previously cataloged).
2. Type cards for card catalog.
3. File cards in card catalog and shelf list.
4. Search items being ordered.
5. Assist with inventories.

Background requirements:

- a. Bachelors degree.
- b. Some library experience.
- c. Ability to work in a confidential manner with legislators.

Recommended salary - \$5,400.

Clerk-Typist

Responsibilities:

1. Clip articles from newspapers and periodicals marked by the professional staff.
2. Mount clippings.
3. Check in material returned.
4. File books, clippings and pamphlets on shelves.
5. Assist in inventory.
6. Operate machine for reproducing cards.
7. Open, date and distribute incoming mail.
8. Operate Xerox machine.

Background requirements:

- a. Ability to type.
- b. Ability to operate office machines such as a copier.
- c. Ability to work in a confidential manner with legislators.

Recommended salary - \$4,200.

APPENDIX II.

Space needs

	<u>Sq. feet thru June 1969</u>	<u>Sq. ft. for next 6 yrs.</u>
Materials on shelves	120	450
Personnel	580	1000
Equipment	<u>300</u>	<u>550</u>
	1000	2000

Costs

Initial costs:

Equipment \$6,775.00

Salaries 40,900.00

Basic collection 3,800.00  
\$51,475.00

Salaries 1 April-July,  
1968 +6,550.00  
\$ 58,025.00

Annual costs:

Travel 300.00

Books 300.00

Subscriptions 1300.00

Equipment 1000.00

Supplies 1200.00

Postage 300.00

Maintenance 225.00

Salaries 40,900.00

Salary increments 3,000.00  
\$48,525.00

APPENDIX III.

BASIC REFERENCE AND SUBSCRIPTION LIST

1. Constance M. Winchell. Guide to Reference Books.
2. U. S. Government Printing Office. Style Manual.
3. Research Centers Directory.
4. Encyclopedia of Associations.
5. Foundation Directory.
6. Encyclopedia Americana.
7. Webster's Third New International Dictionary.
8. Webster's Seventh new Collegiate Dictionary.
9. Dewey, Melville. Dewey Decimal classification and relative index.
10. Gale Research Company. Acronyms dictionary.
11. Fowler, Henry Watson. Dictionary of modern English usage.
12. Roget's International Thesaurus.
13. Reader's Guide to periodical literature.
14. Social Sciences and Humanities index.
15. Schmeckebier, Laurence Frederick. Government publications and their use.
16. New Century cyclopedia of names.
17. Webster's biographical dictionary.
18. Current biography.
19. Who was who in America.
20. Who's Who in America.
21. Who's Who in the Midwest.
22. Who's Who in Minnesota.
23. Bartlett, John. Familiar Quotations.
24. White, Carl M. Sources of information in the social sciences.
25. U. S. Office of Education. Publications of the office of education.

26. Education Index.
27. Manual on certification requirements for school personnel in the United States.
28. Yearbook of education.
29. U. S. Office of Education. Education directory.
30. American Council on Education. American universities and colleges.
31. U. S. Office of Education. Division of Education Statistics. Digest of educational statistics.
32. Yearbook of school law.
33. Who's Who in American Education.
34. Public welfare directory.
35. Andriot, John L. Guide to U. S. Government statistics.
36. U. S. Bureau of the budget. Office of Statistical Standards. Federal Statistical Directory.
37. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Bureau of the census catalog.
38. Information Please Almanac, Atlas and Yearbook.
39. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Statistical abstract of the United States.
40. U. S. Bureau of the Census. County and City data book.
41. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Historical Statistics of the United States.
42. U. S. Bureau of the Census. City finances.
43. U. S. Bureau of the Census. State finances.
44. U. S. National Vital Statistics Division. Vital statistics of the United States.
45. World Almanac, and book of facts.
46. Economic Almanac.
47. Coman, Edwin T. Jr. Sources of business information.
48. Directory of business and financial services.
49. Business periodicals index.

50. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Census of business.
51. U. S. Office of Business Economics. Business Statistics.
52. U. S. President. The economic report of the President transmitted to Congress.
53. U. S. Interstate Commerce Commission. Report on transport statistics in the United States.
54. U. S. Internal Revenue Service. Statistics of Income.
55. Tax Foundation, Inc. Facts and figures on governmental finance.
56. Index to labor union periodicals.
57. U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Directory of national and international labor unions in the U.S.
58. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Census of manufacturers.
59. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Annual survey of manufacturers.
60. Congressional Staff directory.
61. United States government organization manual.
62. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Congressional district data book.
63. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Congressional district data book.  
Supplement: Redistricted states.
64. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Congressional district atlas.
65. Book of the States.
66. Municipal yearbook.
67. Webster's geographical dictionary.
68. U. S. Department of Agriculture. Yearbook of agriculture.
69. U. S. Department of Agriculture. Agricultural statistics.
70. AFL-CIO American Federationist.
71. Aging.
72. American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators Bulletin.
73. American Bar Association Journal.

74. American Farm Bureau Federation Weekly News Letter.
75. American Judicature Society Journal.
76. American Legislator.
77. American Political Science Review.
78. American Academy of Political and Social Science, Annals.
79. Assessors' News Letter.
80. Automated Statutory Reporter.
81. Business Week.
82. California Public Survey.
83. Congressional Digest.
84. Congressional Quarterly Service Weekly Report.
85. Congressional Record.
86. Consumer Finance News.
87. Consumer Price Index.
88. Digest of Opinions of Attorneys General.
89. Digest of Public General Bills, with Index.
90. Economic Indicators.
91. Employment Service Review.
92. Good Government.
93. Harvard Journal on Legislation.
94. Health, Education and Welfare Indicators.
95. IUD Agenda.
96. Journal of Church and State.
97. Labor.
98. Land Economics: A quarterly journal of planning, housing and public utilities.
99. Law and Contemporary Problems.

100. Legal Periodicals Index.
101. Legislative Research Checklist.
102. Legislative Session Sheets.
103. Metropolitan Area Digest.
104. Monthly Catalog of U. S. Government Publications.
105. Monthly Checklist of State Publications.
106. Monthly Labor Review.
107. Municipal Finance.
108. NEA Journal.
109. National Civic Review.
110. National Tax Journal.
111. Nation's Business.
112. New York Times Magazine.
113. News of Farmer Cooperatives.
114. Newsweek.
115. Personnel News.
- 116 Popular Government.
117. Public Administration Review.
118. Public Affairs Information Service.
119. Public Health Reports.
120. Public Management, Devoted to the Conduct of Local Government.
121. Public Personnel Review.
122. Recent Publications on Governmental Problems.
123. Social Security Bulletin.
124. State and Local Government Employment and Payrolls.
125. State Government: The Journal of State Affairs.
126. State Government News.

127. State Tax Guide.
128. Survey of Current Business.
129. Tax Administrators News.
130. Tax Digest.
131. Tax Policy
132. Traffic Laws Commentary.
133. Traffic Quarterly.
134. Trans-Action.
135. United States Law Week.
136. United States News and World Report.
137. Urban Land, News and Trends in City Development.
138. Welfare in Review.
139. Western Political Quarterly.
140. Wholesale Price Index.
141. Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents.

## OBSERVATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION IN FUTURE PLANNING

Mechanization of library facilities and the development of information retrieval systems have not yet reached the sophistication of automated services in industry and science. This lag in development has existed because the computer companies have been too busy supplying business and science with its services and equipment to take a good look at the peculiar requirements of libraries and information services. However, one year ago IBM called a meeting of library administrators to discuss their needs, admitting that they had not previously taken the libraries and their problems seriously.

Libraries have been experimenting for a number of years with automated facilities, but due to the computer industries lack of sympathy, no sure system has yet been devised. Some small industrial libraries are under computer control, but such systems cannot be used in larger, more complex libraries.

Now that the computer companies have come to recognize the need for special consideration of library problems, it is expected that the years ahead will see great strides made. The University of Minnesota libraries have been moving slowly in this area, but they have a very capable advisor in Audrey Grosch. Her work in serials control at the Bio-Medical library represent the most sophisticated system in the country. With federal funds, she will be expanding the system to other parts of the library complex. As the University libraries move in this area, and as other libraries around the country do, it will be advisable for the Legislative Reference Library staff to be aware of these advances. It is conceivable that space for library materials will no longer be a problem for this library with the possible development of an information retrieval system run by the Council of State Governments.