

Legislative Report  
Idaho Library Association Executive Board Meeting  
Friday, April 23, 2004

**The annual ILA Legislative Breakfast** was held on Thursday, January 15, 2004. Coffee was provided by Dawson's Coffee at no charge to us and pastries were provided by Zippoles Bakery at a reduced cost. Each legislator was presented with a copy of "Hike Lewis and Clark's Idaho" and a packet about libraries in Idaho and our proposed changes to Idaho Code. Sixty-three legislators attended, a 60% turnout! Many librarians were also in attendance to speak with their own legislators. Every legislator who attended asked to speak with someone from his or her own district. It's important that ILA members attend the breakfast and that they be aware of the proposals. The Legislative Task Force met following the breakfast to discuss results of conversations with legislators. Only a few members of the Revenue and Taxation Committee attended, and those not on the committee wished us luck.

**The 2004 Legislative Session** was a little different for us this year. On February 11, the committee voted to print our proposals and they became HB660 (increasing the levy limit) and HB662 (cities joining districts without contiguous borders). Following the print hearing, I hand wrote individual thank you notes to those representatives who voted yes. Then, I contacted all librarians in districts of every single committee member and asked them to contact their representative and stress the importance of our bills and ask for their support. Several of them answered me back that they had followed through. I even contacted my own representative to no avail. The Board of Trustees of Ada Community and Meridian Library Districts wrote letters of support for the legislation to committee members in their districts. We expected the hearing to be held during the week of February 23 when the majority of us would be in Seattle at PLA, but it didn't happen. In fact, it didn't happen all. The chair of the committee chose to hold the bills and they were not heard.

**A problem during the session** developed when one of the House Revenue and Taxation committee members decided to propose a change in Idaho Code 63-802 (g), our legislation passed in 1999 to allow us to raise the levy of library districts with a super majority vote. The proposed change would require that 30% of the QUALIFIED voters vote in the election on top of the already restrictive requirements. The committee took no time at all to print it and then send it on to the House where it sailed through. Fortunately, the session was nearly over by this time and there was not time for it go through the Senate committee and onto the Senate floor for a vote. ILA is fortunate to have John Watts watching out for us at the Capitol. The original bill put the same limitation on bond elections. John worked with a committee who made changes to the original bill.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Legislative Task Force will meet April 29, 2004 to debrief the session and make preliminary plans and strategy for the 2005 session.