



March 18, 2013

Ways and Means
General Government Subcommittee
Oregon State Library Testimony

Co-Chair Smith and members of the Committee:

Hello Co-Chair Smith, members of the committee. My name is Eugene Newbill. I am an Acquisitions and Cataloging Specialist with the State Library and I have worked there for 14 years. I am the President of Local 543 and I am here today to testify as a private citizen and a member of SEIU.

At the State Library, I work with our subscriptions to journals and other serials; this includes cataloging and ensuring they are accessible. I also assist with the purchase of new additions to our collection.

We provide a very valuable service to Oregon citizens and State agencies. The services we provide are essential. While we agree that there may be efficiencies that can be made, it is important to note that the need will not go away if we cease to offer the services we offer.

If the legislature eliminates Government Research Services, the research needs of agencies will just be shifted back on to the agencies. This is a cost shift, not a cost savings. A centralized resource for agencies to get the research they need is the only way to ensure a high level of quality and consistency. Decentralizing these services will be a less efficient way to do the work we do.

The State Library is a flat organization with high performing staff that are intelligent, educated, and creative. The State Library went to a team based business model over 17 years ago recognizing the need to optimize the resources and talents available.

I think a case can be made that the State Library should review its model of service delivery and make some recommendations on how to embrace technology more, but to do that, workers have to be a part of the process. Most recently as part of input from staff we have contracted for HR services through DAS HRD to improve our bottom line.

The two workers selected to serve on the steering committee were selected by the Director and do not represent the workers as a whole. I am elected by my co-workers to represent the workers at the library. The elected representatives should select who serves on the steering committee. Frontline workers need to have representation on the steering

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committee now during the planning stages. Not in the future after the decisions about how the agency will reorganize have been made.

If this reorganization is going to be successful, frontline workers have to be a part of the process from the very beginning.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer any questions.