

Dear Chairpersons and the members of this Legislative Committee

My name is Craig Smith. websmithy@comcast.net; casmith@Willamette.edu

I currently live at 2553 Sunwood Ct. NW, Salem, Oregon. I have been employed for 10 years as an Assistant Law Librarian at Willamette University College of Law.

I served for 30 years as a Reference and Information Specialist with the Oregon State Library. I provided information services to state agencies, Governor's Office, and Judicial and Legislative branches of Oregon government. My work unit, Government Research Services (GRS), also provided backup information and lending services to schools and public libraries.

At the State Library the GRS unit consists of a number of Information Specialists with advanced degrees and extensive Reference experience. Included among the team is highly trained clerical staff that provides technical support for the online catalog and services in borrowing materials from distant libraries and institutions for loan to state government employees. The GRS staff coordinates distribution of State of Oregon publications to Oregon's libraries. The GRS staff also coordinates a consortium of local libraries serving as a regional depository for federal documents in various formats published by the U.S. Government Printing Office.

The GRS staff provides workshops and training for all State of Oregon employees interested in using the State Library services as well as special training sessions in using the internet and other specialized tools and State Library subscribed databases to locate information.

Since the 1970s a majority of state agencies have reduced or eliminated their internal library services and have grown to rely upon GRS for independent, non-partisan, and confidential information services. This service is funded through a formula (FTE and prior usage) based assessment charged to each state agency. GRS is critical to the successful information needs of a majority of state agencies.

The reasons for continued operation of the GRS program are:

- Prompt information and materials service by highly trained professionals, non-partisan government service, and confidentiality of information provided.
- Knowledge and skill at available information sources and networks via a centrally located service.