

## **Michigan Library Association Update: Governor Granholm's Executive Order**

**Date: July 14, 2009**

Governor Granholm issued her Executive Order Monday, July 13 calling for the elimination of the Department of History, Arts and Libraries. Following is an overview of pertinent sections of the Executive Order that pertain to the library community, MLA's current position, the options and issues before the library community, the timeline and the future process.

### **Overview of the Executive Order:**

The Governor's Executive Order calls for moving all of the authorities, powers, duties, functions, responsibilities, personnel, equipment, collections and budgetary resources of the Library of Michigan to the Department of Education except for those pertaining to the blind and physically handicapped, which would be transferred to the Michigan Commission for the Blind, and those related to the census data functions, which would be transferred to the Department of Information Technology.

The Governor appointed State Librarian position would be eliminated but the position would be moved to the Department of Education and become a civil service position. This position would report to either the Superintendent of Public Instruction or his or her designee.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction is charged with "implementing cost-saving measures designed to reduce expenditures while protecting the core mission of the library. Unless the Superintendent deems it impracticable, these measures shall include:

- Eliminating circulation of specific collections including the Main, Dewey, General Reference Collections, the Michigan Collection, the Michigan Documents collection and the rare books collection, or transferring such collections to other suitable institutions
- Eliminating circulation and document delivery for the law collection
- Suspending or eliminating participation as a participating lending library in MeLCat
- Eliminating or transferring to other suitable institutions the Federal Documents Depository and the non-Michigan Genealogy collection."

The Executive Order calls for the creation of the Michigan Center for Innovation and Reinvention Board which would serve as an advisory board within the Department of Natural Resources. This nine member board would be comprised of: the Director of the Department of Natural Resources or a designee, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, three members appointed by the Governor, three members appointed from a list nominated by Michigan State University and one member from a list nominated by the Mayor of Lansing.

The Board would be charged with the following objectives: "Preserve and maximize the benefits to the public of existing state library and historical resources including collections, buildings and skilled personnel. Explore creative and innovative ideas for using existing state library and historical resources, in combination with the resources of potential partners, to: serve the public more effectively and more efficiently; promote knowledge and understanding of the state's history and heritage, educate children

and adults in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; enhance the competitiveness of the citizens of this state in the world economy.”

The Board may hire or retain contractors, subcontractors, advisors, consultants, and agents and should complete its plan by June 1, 2010.

#### **Michigan Library Association Position:**

The Michigan Library Association strongly believes that ongoing state support for library services is vital to success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. We urge the Governor and Legislature to:

- Maintain library services within state government and keep their functions whole under the Library of Michigan in the Department of Education or Department of Management and Budget or a new department of Administrative Services.
- Maintain state aid to public libraries at \$10 million in 2009.
- Retain the position and role of the State Librarian.

#### **Options and Issues Before the Library Community:**

The library community is faced with some stark choices and options. The Governor’s Executive Order essentially calls for maintaining statewide library services and oversight within state government. Her budget calls for maintaining state aid to public libraries at \$10 million and as a result, the federal maintenance of effort to support MeL and MeLCat. But the EO calls for reducing or eliminating the state library of Michigan, without a real plan for those library functions.

The Senate Republicans have introduced legislation that would move all of the Library functions (as well as other HAL functions) to the Secretary of State’s office, keeping them whole and intact. But their budget cuts state aid to public libraries and the MeL/MeLCat support to \$7.5 million, which ultimately would make MeL and MeLCat unsustainable.

The library community must have a conversation about what is most essential. MLA will be seeking member input to shape its policy going forward.

#### **Timeline for Action:**

The Senate Commerce Committee is holding a hearing tomorrow morning on the legislation which would move everything to the Secretary of State, at which MLA will testify in support of its original position. MLA will seek input from its members on the issues before us, and the Legislative Committee will make a recommendation to the board on how to proceed. The Executive Order will take effect in 60 days unless it is rejected by both the House and the Senate.