



31 August 2006

Rebecca Danvers, Ph.D.  
Mary Downs, Ph.D.  
IMLS, Office of Research and Technology  
1800 M St., NW, 9th floor  
Washington, DC 20036  
Via Email and Fax: 202-653-4625

Dear Dr. Danvers and Dr. Downs,

I am writing on behalf the Special Libraries Association (SLA) to provide brief comments on your draft plan to consolidate NCLIS into IMLS.

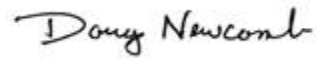
We believe that the Draft Consolidation Plan needs to more specifically address special libraries and information services, and work with public and private agencies in ensuring optimum provision of such services as stated in Public Law 91-345. In this era of information explosion and application of this information, there can a be disconnect between what is a traditional library, information services, and what is needed to most effectively meet the Nation's needs by drawing fully on public and private services. The original function of NCLIS, to have primary responsibility for developing or recommending plans, and advising governments and agencies on policies, must be more nimble and responsive then ever.

One of the main functions of NCLIS as defined in Public Law 91-345 is to advise the President and the Congress on the implementation of national policy with statements, presentations, and reports as deemed appropriate. This is not addressed in the IMLS Draft Consolidation Plan, and is a crucial component in our knowledge driven society. This is critical, and we request a statutory guarantee that IMLS maintain an advisory role with the President and the Congress to help determine policy matters. The global information economy is rapidly incorporating different rules, guidelines, and legislation. An advisory role to the President and the Congress would facilitate dissemination of the most accurate information to advance all involved—libraries, business, individuals, and the global information society as a whole. For this merger to succeed, the IMLS must be the voice of the library and information community in our government's domestic and international policy-making apparatus.

The IMLS Draft Consolidation Plan includes plans for extensive constituent involvement, which will be crucial for successfully merging these groups with the

appropriate checks and balances. The 11,000 members of SLA appreciate your consideration of their perspective in your plans to implement the consolidation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doug Newcomb".

Douglas Newcomb  
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