

**TESTIMONY BY PATRICIA A. TUMULTY,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NEW JERSEY
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
IN OPPOSITION OF RESOLUTION #1610,
RESOLUTION #2337
RESOLUTION #3081 ALL WHICH SEEK TO
REDUCE THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE
KNOWLEDGE INITIATIVE BY \$1,000,000**

The Knowledge Initiative has been an extremely innovative program which has proven to be a valuable economic and educational resource for the residents of New Jersey. On behalf of the library community, I want to say that we are absolutely dismayed that this program is receiving a million dollar decrease from \$3 million to \$2 million which is a 33% cut in its funding. This will undoubtedly severely impact the program and will cause disruption and elimination of services. The appropriation of \$ 3 million in Governor Corzine's budget was just enough funding to continue the program at its current operational level for FY08. It provided no additional funding in the upcoming fiscal year. It simply maintained the status quo for this program.

The initial funding for the program was provided through legislative leadership in 2005 when an appropriation of \$ 6

million provided 2 years worth of funding to purchase electronic materials which provide entrepreneurs, small business owners, researchers and students with access to hundreds of top science and technology journal articles and key business information which is not free via the Internet. This information is essential for academic excellence and economic development. Since its inception, these resources have been used millions of times by residents of New Jersey.

They are offered in college and universities throughout the state, by the NJ State Library, through public libraries and at business incubators and small businesses served by the NJ Economic Development Authority. If these organizations had contacted for these materials separately it would have cost \$74.5 million to the participating organizations. It has been a model of shared services and cooperation.

The program has received endorsements from numerous business and scientific organizations including the NJ Business and Industry Association, Southern NJ Development Council, the Biotechnology Council of New Jersey and the NJ Business Incubator Network. It is currently been named a semi-finalist in the 2007 Innovations Awards program of the Council of State Governments. The program also earned many accolades from numerous small business owners who depend on these resources to remain competitive in our expanding global economy.

REALITY

The current NJKI database licenses all expire before September 2007. If funding of the Knowledge Initiative is reduced by 33%, one third of the information currently licensed by the State Library would no longer be available effective the beginning of this fiscal year. This will cause very serious services disruptions.

Throughout this current budget process, we have heard no criticism of this program, therefore, this 33% cut was totally unanticipated. We are just beginning to judge its impact but we know it will be severe.

Seton Hall University has already reported that to replace the resources which were purchased through KI in its budget would cost over \$100,000. These resources are critical for many of its science programs in particular the nursing program. We are joined here today by other librarians who know they will not be able to replace these valuable resources in their budgets. This funding has been particularly critical for two year colleges which are getting access to high end research materials particularly important for students who are going to continue their studies at other state colleges or universities.

WHAT WILL BE LOST?

I cannot predict to you today which specific resources will be lost to the residents of New Jersey but a 33% cut goes to the heart of the program.

Will the impact be felt by small business owners who use a wonderful business resource called **Reference USA** which is the world's most comprehensive business database?

Will the impact be felt by students in our nursing and health care programs when they no longer have access to **OVID** medical resources?

Will the impact be felt by the biotech community when they no longer have access to the **Biomedical Reference** collection?

These are just a few of the many groups of individuals who depend on these resources. Our budget request in FY08 was to simply maintain the program not to expand it. This cut will impact us deeply.

I know you will receive packets of information from the NJ State Library which contain additional testimony from supporters of this wonderful initiative.

In a world where information is the currency for advancement in business and education, this budget takes those resources away from the people of New Jersey. We simply do not understand this.

***PLEASE RESTORE THE FUNDING CUT TO THE
KNOWLEDGE INITIATIVE PROGRAM.***