

STATE OF ILLINOIS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
SPRINGFIELD, 62706

GEORGE H. RYAN
GOVERNOR

July 26, 2001

To the Honorable Members of the
Illinois House of Representatives
92nd General Assembly

Today I am signing House Bill 1785, which amends the Illinois Local Library Act and the Public Library District Act of 1991. It requires a person residing outside of a public library service area to apply for a non-resident card at the library closest to the person's principal residence. It also provides that non-resident library cards may be used at all of the participating public libraries in the regional library system. Now, a non-resident card may be used only at the library where the card was issued.

In Illinois, there are more than 1 million people in unincorporated and rural areas who do not belong to or are a part of a library district. There have been a variety of efforts over the years to expand access to those not in a library district. This legislation does not provide the answers to all of the problems facing our public libraries today. It does, however, move the State of Illinois toward more equitable access to our public libraries. It is my hope that one day all Illinois residents will be part of a library district.

The Illinois Local Library Act provides that the Illinois State Library shall establish the formula by which local libraries determine the costs that will be assessed to nonresidents for the use of libraries in Illinois. House Bill 1785 will necessitate that this formula be modified. It is my desire that the Illinois State Library work closely with local libraries in modifying these rules to ensure that all interested parties' concerns are addressed.

Sincerely,
s/GEORGE H. RYAN
Governor