

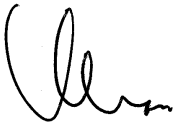
**RESOLUTION ON EQUAL ACCESS TO 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY COMMUNICATIONS**

- WHEREAS,** Equal, ready and equitable access to all information is a fundamental tenet of a free society; and
- WHEREAS,** The American Library Association (ALA) has a long-standing history of supporting equitable, unfettered access to all types of information; and
- WHEREAS,** The ALA recognizes that nearly a quarter of the population is disabled; and
- WHEREAS,** The library’s mission is to provide equitable access to all, including people with disabilities, access to library collections and resources and to the Internet; and
- WHEREAS,** The ALA champions the use of assistive technologies to help ensure “same time” access to everyone, regardless of disability; and
- WHEREAS,** Congress last acted in 1996 to update laws to ensure access to communications devices by people with disabilities in 1996; and
- WHEREAS,** Advances in technology have transformed the way in which society communicates via the Internet and by a variety of assistive technologies; and,
- WHEREAS,** Current and emerging technologies must be designed to be accessible to the disabled community; and,
- WHEREAS,** The Equal Access to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communications Act, S. 3304, introduced in the U.S. Senate and the Twenty-first Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2009, H.R. 3101, introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives would update communications laws to ensure that individuals with vision, hearing and other disabilities are able to utilize fully broadband services and equipment and have better access to video programming devices and other technologies; and
- WHEREAS,** S. 3304 and H.R. 3101 recognize the important role of adaptive technologies and would rightly require that makers of such technologies, including hardware and software makers, ensure their products are accessible; and
- WHEREAS,** The measures in S. 3304 and H.R. 3101 would help shrink the digital divide and greatly improve access to many sources of information, ranging from books to websites, of which many are currently unavailable to persons with disabilities; and
- WHEREAS,** Passage of the bills would help libraries better meet the needs of patrons with disabilities and would also enable those with disabilities to participate fully in an increasingly “online” society; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the American Library Association:
1. Strongly supports The Equal Access to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communications Act, S. 3304, and the Twenty-first Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2009,

H.R. 3101, as passage of these bills would update communications laws to ensure that individuals with vision, hearing and other disabilities are able to utilize fully broadband services and equipment and have better access to video programming devices and other technologies; and

2. Calls upon Congress to pass S. 3304 and H.R. 3101.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association  
Tuesday, June 29, 2010  
In Washington, DC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Michael Fiels', with a stylized, cursive script.

Keith Michael Fiels  
ALA Executive Director and  
Secretary to the ALA Council