

**Resolution in Support of the National Agricultural Library (NAL)**

WHEREAS, The National Agricultural Library (NAL) is the nation's primary library and comprehensive information management system in the United States, with collections, services, and library research capabilities spanning all areas of food and agriculture, impacting the lives of every resident of the Nation every day; and

WHEREAS, NAL is the world's largest agricultural library, providing collections, journals, databases, and other data and information and services to help citizens establish successful agricultural practices, management of agro-businesses, and assists the public with guidance on gardening, animal husbandry, organic farming, pesticide management, ecological stewardship, water quality, invasive species, sources of funding for rural communities, healthy diet choices, food safety, and other important issues; and

WHEREAS, NAL handles more than 250,000 transactions per day, and

WHEREAS, NAL, along with the National Library of Education (NLE); National Library of Medicine (NLM); and the National Transportation Library (NTL), is one of four national libraries with responsibility for collecting and organizing materials in support of research in their special fields; they should receive support commensurate with these responsibilities, and

WHEREAS, While the costs of purchasing books, journals, database operations and management, delivery of comprehensive reference services, and other library materials and services have increased as much as 12% annually over the last two decades and NAL's appropriated budget has remained essentially constant in real terms since 1995; and

WHEREAS, Libraries throughout the United States rely on the NAL as its primary national depository for unique agricultural literature and that the materials collected by NAL are not held in the Library of Congress or other research libraries; and

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WHEREAS, Universities, state agricultural departments and bureaus, and other institutions are also faced with budget cuts, and increasingly, have depended on NAL to ensure that researchers, educators, policy makers, officials, managers, and the general public have regular access to NAL's resources, and

WHEREAS, Funding for the National Agricultural Library and significant collaborative initiatives such as the Agriculture Network Information Center (AgNIC) has remained flat since 1995;

WHEREAS, The President's FY 2009 Budget Estimate includes a \$4 million reduction from the FY 2008 Budget estimate, and \$6 million less than the FY 2007 actual budget for the Library;

WHEREAS, The negative impact of these budget reductions will force NAL to abolish almost 60 positions by the end of FY2009 from their FY2007 levels;

WHEREAS, The proposed FY2009 budget would result in NAL's reduction of acquisition of print and electronic resources, eliminate support for NAL as a Federal document depository, reduce support for *AGRICOLA* (bibliographic database), curtail services for essential library research, reference, and referral services, curtail maintenance of NAL's Special Collections of rare and historical documents, severely reduce document delivery services for the public and outside researchers (leaving tens-of-thousands of requests for materials unfulfilled each year significantly hampering research, education, and policy opportunities), and therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association urges the United States Congress to fund NAL for FY2009 at the \$22 million level recommended by the House Agricultural Subcommittee, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association incorporate our 4 national libraries (National Agricultural Library (NAL); National Library of Education (NLE); National Library of Medicine (NLM); and the National Transportation Library (NTL) in the @Your Library campaign to raise the awareness of the value of our national libraries to the ALA's membership and the American public.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association  
Wednesday, July 2, 2008  
In Anaheim, California