

RESOLUTION ON NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES
PRESERVATION EFFORTS

- WHEREAS, The acids used in paper since about 1850 are destroying major portions of library collections, threatening current and future research and scholarship; and
- WHEREAS, The number of library volumes so brittle that further use may result in loss of text is now estimated to be 76 million and expected to rise to 114 million in the next 20 years; and
- WHEREAS, Without treatment, all but about ten percent of the remainder of book collections are expected to reach the same brittle state; and
- WHEREAS, NEH, working with such coordinative groups as the Commission on Preservation and Access, will ensure that aid for brittle books is used in the most efficient fashion; and
- WHEREAS, At Congressional request, the National Endowment for the Humanities proposed a "capability budget" showing how additional funds beyond its official budget request could be used to address the brittle books crisis; and
- WHEREAS, Together with preventive strategies such as mass deacidification and use of permanent alkaline paper, a major national initiative such as that proposed by NEH to preserve already embrittled volumes is urgently needed to address this national problem; and
- WHEREAS, The House FY 1989 funding bill (HR 4867) for NEH includes the \$12.5 million for the NEH Office of Preservation as proposed in the NEH capability budget, but the Senate version includes only \$4.5 million as earlier requested by the Administration; now, therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That the American Library Association commend the National Endowment for the Humanities for its efforts on preservation of deteriorating library materials, and commend Representative Sidney Yates of Illinois for his long-standing concern about the brittle books problem and his initiative in recommending increased funding; and, be it further
- RESOLVED, That the American Library Association urge the House-Senate conferees on HR 4867, the FY 1989 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, to provide \$12.5 million, including \$8 million in new funding above current levels, for an increased effort directed at the national brittle books crisis.

Adopted by the Council of the
American Library Association
New Orleans, Louisiana
July 13, 1988
(Council Document #71)