

For Immediate Release
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ALA 1994 Annual Conference Highlights

Resolutions in support of public access and intellectual property principles in development of the information highway were among actions taken by the American Library Association (ALA) Council, the association's governing body, during the 113th Annual Conference held June 23-30 in Miami Beach.

A resolution on Telecommunications Policy, which will go to Congress and the Clinton Administration, recommends that any new telecommunications legislation should:

1) ensure public access to telecommunications services, especially during the transition to the new technological environment;

2) reduce barriers by employing preferential rates, set asides, least cost access, universal service contributions and other approaches appropriate for the technology;

3) include a process to assess and review the impact of change in the regulatory environment on public interests including libraries and all of education and state and local government;

4) ensure open data network standards that will allow open access and interoperability and avoid control of access by only a few.

Annual Conference Highlights -- add one

A resolution on Intellectual Property Principles urges that fair use, the library and other relevant provisions of the Copyright Act of 1976 be preserved in the development of the electronic information infrastructure and that ALA work with the library community, the Administration, Congress, publishers and developers of new media to ensure that principles of intellectual property are applied.

The Council also passed a resolution on Copyright Reform Act expressing ALA's opposition to any legislation such as the Copyright Reform Act of 1993 that "will fundamentally alter the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976 and alter a carefully crafted process that protects the rights of authors and copyright owners." The resolution calls for ALA to work to maintain a registration system that allows for deposit of copies of works to the U.S. Copyright Office and the Library of Congress.

The Council also endorsed a revision of the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), due for reconsideration by Congress in 1994, which would: continue a state-based, flexible approach; stimulate excellence and enhance delivery of library services; improve library services so that all people have convenient and appropriate access to information via new and emerging technologies (Title A); and improve library and information services to those of all ages and cultures who have difficulty getting to a library or are in need of special services (Title B).

The LSCA Reauthorization resolution also calls for ALA to create a broadly representative mechanism for redefining other federal roles and addressing national needs in library and information services and affirms that ALA's policy directions be flexible enough to work with the Administration, Congress and other interested parties.

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Annual Conference Highlights -- add two

In other actions, the Council:

urged the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science to conduct a survey to identify those states where neither legislation nor an executive order mandates the use of permanent paper for producing state and local documents and publications of enduring value.

supported and encouraged prompt enactment by Congress of the proposed Library of Congress Financial Reform Act which would authorize a revolving fund for improved accountability of funds and other measures to update the Library's financial policy and practices.

urged the Senate Appropriations Committee to fund all currently funded LSCA and Higher Education Act library programs at least at FY 1994 levels and to reserve funds for the school library media resource provisions of pending legislation to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

rescinded the Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights entitled "Regulations and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services and Facilities" (ALA policy 53.1.11). New "Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations and

Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services and Facilities" have been developed by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee.

Copies are available from the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom.

odirected the ALA Executive Board to establish a process for reviewing ALA's relationships with external organizations.

Total conference attendance was 12,627 members, exhibitors and guests, including 8,025 paid registrations -- down about a third from the 1993 Annual Conference held in New Orleans.

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Annual Conference Highlights -- add three

Paul Graller, conference services director, reported that the drop in paid registration will have a similar impact on net revenues but that the conference will still be profitable. He attributed the decline in attendance to concerns about heat and security in Miami Beach and competition for librarians' travel dollars from other major conferences held in different parts of the country.

The 1995 ALA Midwinter Meeting will be held February 3-9 in Philadelphia. The Annual Conference is scheduled for June 22-29 in Chicago.