

Resolution on Freedom of Information Day, March 16

- WHEREAS, James Madison, our fourth President, said, "Knowledge will forever govern ignorance, and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives;" and
- WHEREAS, As a profession committed to a democratic society, librarians have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations; and
- WHEREAS, The American Library Association considers access to information and intellectual freedom among its highest priorities; and
- WHEREAS, Access to information has been threatened by curtailed availability of information through selective budget cuts, interference with communication in scientific communities, suppression of information, campaigns of disinformation, increased governmental secrecy, and attempts to control dissent; and
- WHEREAS, The American Library Association in 1984 promulgated a resolution on the Right to Know reaffirming the Association's commitment to the people's right to information; and
- WHEREAS, The American Library Association has assumed a leadership position in upholding freedom of information through such means as its work on behalf of intellectual freedom, its award-winning publication "Less Access to Less Information By and About the U. S. Government" and the creation of a broad national Coalition on Government Information concerned with these issues; and
- WHEREAS, James Madison has further said that, "A popular government without popular information or means of acquiring it is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy, or perhaps both;" now, therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That the American Library Association support the Congress and the President in their proclamation designating James Madison's birthday, March 16, as Freedom of Information Day; and, be it further
- RESOLVED, That in pursuit of the goals of this proclamation defending and encouraging the people's right to access to information the American Library Association use its many resources to publicize, inform and celebrate March 16 as Freedom of Information Day; and, be it further
- RESOLVED, That the American Library Association encourage librarians throughout the country to bring the issues of freedom of information and barriers to information access into public consciousness and public debate by mounting appropriate information programs within libraries and their communities on that day.

Adopted by the Council of the
American Library Association
San Antonio, Texas
January 13, 1988
(Council Document #38)