

RESOLUTION: FREE ACCESS TO INFORMATION

WHEREAS

INFORMATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR ALL PERSONS AT ALL AGE LEVELS AND ALL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LEVELS, AND

WHEREAS

PUBLIC LIBRARIES, SUPPORTED BY TAX FUNDS ARE "INSTITUTIONS OF EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC LIVING", (LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS), AND EXIST TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO ALL PERSONS. THEY HAVE A SPECIAL OBLIGATION TO THOSE WHO HAVE NO OTHER ACCESS TO INFORMATION i.e. THE POOR, THE YOUNG, AND THE INSTITUTIONALIZED, AND

WHEREAS THE INCREASED USE OF EXPENSIVE, EFFICIENT AUTOMATED BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA BASES, (MANY OF WHICH HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED WITH TAX FUNDS), HAS CAUSED SOME TAX-SUPPORTED LIBRARIES TO CHARGE FOR THOSE SERVICES AND MAY SET PRECEDENTS OF FEE SETTING, AND

WHEREAS

THE CHARGING OF FEES FOR INFORMATION FURTHER DEPRIVES THOSE WHO CANNOT AFFORD THE FEES, AND THUS EFFECTIVELY DISCRIMINATES AGAINST THEM, AND

WHEREAS

A.L.A. HAS URGED THE FREE-FLOW OF INFORMATION AND HAS SPOKEN OUT CLEARLY AGAINST ALL OBSTACLES THAT STAND IN THE WAY OF AN INDIVIDUAL'S ACCESS TO IDEAS AND INFORMATION,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT A.L.A. REAFFIRM THE CONCEPT OF ACCESS WITHOUT CHARGE, TO INFORMATION IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND TAX-SUPPORTED LIBRARIES, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED

THAT A.L.A. GO ON PUBLIC RECORD AGAINST THE CHARGING OF FEES BY TAX-SUPPORTED LIBRARIES FOR PROVIDING INFORMATION AND REFERENCE SERVICES WHICH HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN FREE.

ZOLA HORN
COUNCILOR AT LARGE

REVIEWED FOR CONFORMANCE WITH
GUIDELINES
by Council Resolutions Committee

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Maryann Duggan