

**This resolution was defeated by the ALA Council on July 1, 2013**

**Resolution on Divestment of Holdings in Fossil Fuel Companies  
and Libraries' Role in a Peaceful Transition to a Fossil-Free Economy**

Whereas the American Library Association recognizes its broad social responsibilities (Policy A.1.1);

Whereas in light of alarming evidence of the extent CO2 emissions are having on climate change, the organization 350.org has launched a divestment campaign, supported by individuals such as Bishop Desmond Tutu, economist Naomi Klein, and activist Van Jones, prompting municipalities and institutions of higher learning across the country to divest holdings in fossil fuel industries;

Whereas precedence regarding divestment exists within ALA in its participation in the 1980s campaign against South African apartheid when divestment and boycotts were used as tools for non-violent political change;

Whereas global climate change and resource depletion is prompting military authorities to prepare for inevitable social instability, which in the U.S. will likely be exacerbated by a culture of violence and racism unless steps are taken to address and mitigate these tendencies;

Whereas libraries and communities have witnessed the impacts of climate change in the form of increasingly powerful floods, hurricanes, tornados, wildfires, agricultural damage, and rising sea-levels;

Whereas organizations representing many institutional investors have called on governments to “develop workable frameworks that will reduce climate risk and support low carbon investment”; and

Whereas ALA’s Strategic Plan 2011-2015 states: “Libraries are widely recognized as key players in economic development, in building strong and vibrant communities, and in sustaining a strong democracy;” now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, that the American Library Association, on behalf of its members:

1. ~~Directs its endowment trustees to~~ Begin divesting in the fossil fuel industry by excluding our three holdings in the “Filthy Fifteen” named in the Endowment Trustees’ Information Report to BARC that have “little or no significant negative impact” in the short term on ALA.
2. ~~Urge libraries, in addition to collecting and providing information on the environment, to take steps in assisting our communities in a peaceful transition to fossil free energy sources, especially those communities whose economic well being are heavily, if not completely, dependent on fossil fuels.~~

Moved by: Ben Trapskin, ALA Councilor-at-Large, 612-327-0980

Seconded by: Ann Crewdson, Councilor-at-Large, 425-891-1802

**Revised 7/1/2013**

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Supporting documentation:

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- "Seattle: An Update on Fossil Fuel Divestment." *States News Service* 21 Dec. 2012. *General OneFile*. Web. 31 Dec. 2012. <http://mayormcinn.seattle.gov/an-update-on-fossil-fuel-divestment/>
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# RESOLUTION E-FORM

## Resolution on Divestment of Holdings in Fossil Fuel Companies and Libraries' Role in a Peaceful Transition to a Fossil-Free Economy

Submitted on Mon, 06/24/2013 - 13:21

Date: 06/24/2013

Resolution author(s): Al Kagan, Ann Crewdson and Ben Trapskin E-mail address:

[akagan@illinois.edu](mailto:akagan@illinois.edu) 1. Title of Resolution: Resolution on Divestment of Holdings in Fossil Fuel Companies and Libraries' Role in a Peaceful Transition to a Fossil-Free Economy 2. ALA Units and/or Committees Consulted (if any): SRRT, REFORMA, Endowment Trustees, BARC 3. Endorsements by ALA Units and/or Committees (if any): SRRT and REFORMA 4. Fiscal implications: "relatively minor." Aperio Group as reported by Endowment Trustees memo to BARC, May 22, 2013. ALA CD #16.2 BARC #31.0 EBD

#13.8 Annual Conference 2012-2013

5. List all parties to whom resolution should be sent: ALA Endowment Trustees, CEO of Dominion Resources, CEO of Duke Energy, CEO of Edison International, 350.org, President Obama, Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz, and library press.

6. Impact on ALA Policies and Positions: Places ALA in a leadership position among professional associations on matters regarding climate change.

6a) ALA general policy or viewpoint: Recognition of impact of climate change

6b) Change in existing policy: Amend ALA Policy B.5.5, Environmental Issues, to include Resolved no. 3.

6c) New policy:

The American Library Association urges librarians and library governing boards to collect and provide information on the condition of our Earth, its air, ground, water, and living organisms from all available sources. In keeping with its decision to divest holdings in fossil fuel corporations, ALA further urges libraries to take steps in assisting our communities in a peaceful transition to fossil-free energy sources, especially those communities whose economic well-being are heavily, if not completely, dependent on fossil fuels.

6d) Policy conflicts: none

7. Initiating Committee or Unit (if any): ALA members 8. Pertinent Background Information: See supporting documentation appended to resolution

9. Mover's Name: Ben Trapskin

9a) Mover's Local Telephone Number: 612-327-0980

10. Secunder's Name: Ann Crewdson

10a) Secunder's Local Telephone Number: 425-891-1802