

**ALA Executive Board
Midwinter 2016**

SUBJECT: Potential Site Change for 2021 Annual Conference

ACTION REQUESTED: Approval

DRAFT MOTION: *The ALA Executive Board authorizes ALA Conference Services to seek termination of a space hold in San Francisco for the 2021 ALA Annual Conference, but does not authorize payment of cancellation penalties.*

REQUESTED BY: Mary W. Ghikas, Senior Associate Executive Director, ALA
Paul Graller, Vice-President, Hall-Erikson/Conference Services Manager

DATE: 30 December 2015

BACKGROUND:

In November 2009, ALA booked two conferences in San Francisco: 2015 and 2021. During the execution of the 2015 Annual Conference, it became clear that skyrocketing hotel rates in San Francisco (see attachment 1) and the significant expansion of the Pride Parade had created a problematic environment for the ALA Annual Conference. Costs, including staff resource, required for the conference had reached a point that seems economically unsustainable. Further, hotel rates were a barrier for members seeking to attend.

Based on legal review, staff believes there is a basis for requesting cancellation of the site commitment for 2021. Further, informal communication from hotels during the period before the 2015 conference suggests that hotels would welcome cancellation, enabling them to sell rooms at a higher rate elsewhere. Nevertheless, it is possible the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau will not agree to cancellation.

Should San Francisco not agree to cancellation, we will complete the 2021 Annual Conference in the city – but will not seek to contract for future conferences. Should San Francisco agree to cancellation, Conference Services proposes to seek a bid from them – along with other potential west coast sites – for a future Midwinter.

Attachments:

Room Rate Comparison: Chicago Annual Conference 2013/San Francisco Annual Conference 2015

Table 1: Room Rates for 2013 Chicago Annual Conference

Rate Range	Peak Rooms in Range	% of block	
Below \$160	65	1%	
\$160-169	250	3%	
\$170-179	958	12%	
\$180-189	182	2%	
\$190-199	5174	63%	81%*
\$200-209	550	7%	
\$210-219	303	4%	
\$220-229	670	8%	

*81% of peak rooms under \$199

Table 2: Room Rates for 2015 San Francisco Annual Conference

Rate Range	Peak Rooms in Range	% of block	
Below \$160	0	0%	
\$160-169	65	1%	
\$170-179	75	1%	
\$180-189	126	2%	
\$190-199	1848	23%	27%*
\$200-209	404	5%	
\$210-219	543	7%	
\$220-229	2428	31%	
\$230-239	285	4%	
\$240-249	1327	17%	
\$250-259	0	0%	
\$260-269	384	5%	
Over \$269	397	5%	

*27% of peak rooms under \$199