

MOTIONS RELATED TO CD24, OUTSOURCING & PRIVATIZATION IN AMERICAN LIBRARIES

Definitions used in these motions are found on the reverse.

MOTION #1

ALA should reaffirm the following fundamental values of libraries in the context of discussing outsourcing and privatization of library services. These values include:

- A. That libraries are an essential public good and are fundamental institutions in democratic societies;
- B. That intellectual freedom is a basic democratic privilege, and that ALA defends the right of library users to read, seek information and speak freely, as guaranteed by the First Amendment; and
- C. That any outsourcing activities in libraries must be compatible with ALA advocacy of policies that support libraries as democratic institutions serving people of all ages, income levels and races, and providing the range of information resources needed to live, learn, govern and work.

MOTION #2

The respective ALA-units should be instructed to develop decision-making guidelines for libraries and jurisdictions at the local level, specifically that divisions develop policies and standards to assist local libraries addressing outsourcing and privatization issues.

MOTION #3

The Intellectual Freedom Committee shall provide an interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights as it relates to outsourcing and privatization.

MOTION #4

ALA should commission a formal study on the impact of outsourcing and privatization on public services and library management, including:

- A. A review of the impact of such activities over a defined period of time;
- B. An analysis of the impact of these activities on library governance and First Amendment issues;
- C. The impact on maintenance of a quality workforce;
- D. The impact on the community of libraries and their cooperative endeavors.

MOTION #5

ALA should adopt the following policy statement:

ALA opposes privatizing core library services to for-profit corporations.

MOTION #6

ALA should adopt the following policy statement:

Outsourcing of specific services or tasks by libraries shall be undertaken only when the quality of these services can be assured and the fundamental values of librarianship are not compromised.

DEFINITIONS USED BY THE OUTSOURCING TASK FORCE

For the purpose of its study, the Task Force has adopted the following definitions:

Outsourcing is the contracting to external companies or organizations, functions that would otherwise be performed by library employees.

Privatization is the shifting of policy making and the management of library services or the responsibility for the performance of core library services in their entirety, from the public to the private sector.

Core services are those professional activities that define the profession of librarianship. These include collection development and organization; gathering and providing information; making the collection accessible to all library users; providing assistance in the use of the collection; and providing oversight and management of these activities.

It is acknowledged that the distinctions between the terms "outsourcing" and "privatization" are not exact and are subject to arbitrary interpretations. Within the context of this report, the Task Force has utilized the term "outsourcing" for contracting for specific services; and the term "privatization" when the responsibility for day-to-day management of a library or for establishing or altering policies that affect the delivery of service is delegated to an external commercial agency.