

RESOLUTION ON UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO BROADBAND

- WHEREAS,** The freedom of speech is a right in the United States; and
- WHEREAS,** Access to unfettered information is a corollary right; and
- WHEREAS,** The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 authorizes the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to create a National Broadband Plan that "shall seek to ensure that all people of the United States have access to broadband capability and shall establish benchmarks for meeting that goal."; and
- WHEREAS,** The American Library Association (ALA) states in "Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks" (53.1.19) that "all individuals have a right to information"; and
- WHEREAS,** Universal broadband access is now and will remain essential for all to realize the benefits of our national right to information, the right to read, the right to freedom of speech; and
- WHEREAS,** The public needs access to information in order to live, learn, work and govern, and this information is increasingly only available online; and
- WHEREAS,** Students and lifelong learners require universal access to broadband to develop information and digital literacy skills necessary to compete in the 21st century workforce; and
- WHEREAS,** The information and resources critical to participate in a democratic society and the global information economy are increasingly available only online; and
- WHEREAS,** America's libraries provide no-fee broadband access in communities and are essential to providing access to information and interactive communications; and
- WHEREAS,** Universal broadband access bridges the digital divide; and
- WHEREAS,** The right to access information transcends technological change; now, therefore, be it
- RESOLVED,** That the American Library Association:
1. Urges federal, state and local governments to recognize that universal access to broadband is essential to support the basic right of unfettered access to information in order for the public to

participate in the digital world and the global information economy; and be it further

2. That federal, state and local governments, as well as the public, support libraries as essential providers of broadband access for communities across America.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
Wednesday, January 19, 2010
In Boston, Massachusetts



Keith Michael Fiels
ALA Executive Director and
Secretary of the ALA Council