

ALA American Library Association

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE INTER-ASSOCIATION WORKING GROUP ON GOVERNMENT INFORMATION POLICY

- WHEREAS,** The American Library Association has a long-standing record of support for the Federal Depository Library Program and enhanced public access to government information in all formats; and
- WHEREAS,** Congress has made it a priority in the 105th Congress to revise U.S.C. Title 44, the law covering production, dissemination and access to federal government information; and
- WHEREAS,** The Inter-Association Working Group on Government Information Policy was convened to develop a legislative proposal to improve the Federal Depository Library Program and enhance public access to government information through the revision of U.S.C. Title 44, to seek consensus on this proposal, and to develop strategies to effect the successful passage into law of the library community's proposal; and
- WHEREAS,** The Inter-Association Working Group on Government Information Policy is a cooperative team of representatives from the:
- American Library Association, its divisions and units,
 - American Association of Law Libraries,
 - Association of Research Libraries,
 - Chief Officers of State Library Agencies,
 - Medical Library Association,
 - Special Libraries Association,
 - Urban Libraries Council; and
- WHEREAS,** The document, "Goals for Revising U.S.C. Title 44 to Enhance Public Access to Federal Government Information," represents the consensus of the Inter-Association Working Group on Government Information Policy on the goals for revising U.S.C. Title 44, the principles upon which these goals are based, and the areas of reform necessary to improve public access to government information; and
- WHEREAS,** These goals for revising U.S.C. Title 44 are:
- 1) The law must broaden, strengthen, and enhance public access to all forms of government information;

- 2) The law must strengthen the role of the Superintendent of Documents and the Federal Depository Library Program in providing public access to government information;
- 3) The law must establish the affirmative responsibility of the federal government to preserve and provide permanent public access to its information, and to ensure the authenticity of government formation;
- 4) The law must resolve the constitutional or inter-branch issues regarding the oversight and administration of the life-cycle of government information (creation, acquisition, production, bibliographic control, dissemination, and permanent public access) to establish clear accountability and facilitate public access to government information from the legislative, executive, and judicial branches; and

WHEREAS,

The "Goals" statement has been the basis for the Inter-Association Working Group's legislative proposal and is intended to be the basis of ongoing discussions and negotiations with Members of Congress and government officials in efforts to revise U.S.C. Title 44 to improve the Federal Depository Library Program and enhance public access to government information in an electronic age; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED,

That the American Library Association endorse in principle the "Goals for Revising U.S.C. Title 44 to Enhance Public Access to Federal Government Information" (May 1997); and be it further

RESOLVED,

That the American Library Association affirm the inter-association process undertaken jointly by the participating national library associations in the Inter-Association Working Group on Government Information Policy to develop a consensus legislative proposal to improve access to government information, and to effect the successful passage into law of legislative proposals which meet the goals defined in the Inter-Association Working Group "Goals" statement.

Adopted by the Council of the
American Library Association
San Francisco, CA
July 2, 1997
(Council Document 20.7)