

Resolution on the Importance of Sustainable Libraries

Whereas our communities are faced with economic, environmental and societal changes that are of great concern to our quality of life;

Whereas libraries are uniquely positioned and essential to build the capacity of the communities they serve to become sustainable, resilient and regenerative;

Whereas library leaders, and those who inspire future library leaders, have a mandate to ensure future access to economical library services;

Whereas libraries that demonstrate good stewardship of the resources entrusted to them can build community support that leads to sustainable funding;

Whereas the people who work in our libraries and those who access services in our facilities deserve a healthy environment in which to do so;

Whereas the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has determined that: “Human influence on the climate system is clear... Recent climate changes have had widespread impacts on human and natural systems”;¹

Whereas the American Library Association has acknowledged in its 2015 Strategic Plan that “Libraries are widely recognized as key players in economic development, in building strong and vibrant communities, and in sustaining a strong democracy” and launched the ALA Center for Civic Life (CCL) in 2010 in conjunction with the Kettering Foundation to promote community engagement and foster public deliberation through libraries; and

Whereas libraries that demonstrate leadership in making sustainable decisions that positively address climate change, respect and use natural resources, and create healthy indoor and outdoor environments will stabilize and reduce their long-term energy costs, help build more sustainable communities, and thereby increase community support for the library; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

1. recognizes the important and unique role libraries play in wider community conversations about resiliency, climate change, and a sustainable future and begins a new era of thinking sustainably in order to consider the economic, environmental and socially equitable viability of choices made on behalf of the association;
2. enthusiastically encourages activities by itself, its membership, library schools and state associations to be proactive in their application of sustainable thinking in the areas of their facilities, operations, policy, technology, programming, partnerships and library school curricula; and
3. directs the ALA Executive Director to pursue sustainable choices when planning conferences and meetings and to actively promote best practices of sustainability through ALA publications, research and educational opportunities to reach our shared goal of vital, visible and viable libraries for the future.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
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NOTES

- 1 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 2014: *Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Core Writing Team, R.K. Pachauri and L.A. Meyer (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 151 pp.