Resolution on replacing the Library of Congress Subject Heading
"Illegal Aliens" with "Undocumented Immigrants"

Whereas the terms "illegal" and "alien," when used in reference to people, have undergone
pejoration and acquired derogatory connotations, becoming increasingly associated with
nativist and racist sentiments;

Whereas the appropriateness of the word "alien" as a legal term is being questioned, with the
New York Times Editorial Board calling for it to be retired and the state of California
passing SB 432 to remove it from the state's labor code;

Whereas referring to undocumented immigrants as "illegal" is increasingly viewed as
dehumanizing, offensive, inflammatory, and even a racial slur;

Whereas a national campaigns such as "Drop the I-Word" and #WordsMatter are urging news
media to stop using the word "illegal" to describe immigrants;

Whereas many news organizations have committed to not using the word "illegal" to describe
immigrants, including the Associated Press, USA Today, ABC, The Chicago Tribune,
and the LA Times;

Whereas college students have petitioned the Library of Congress to retire the subject heading
Illegal aliens;

Whereas there is no explicit mandate from Congress that LC must follow the U.S. Code
terminology in this matter;

Whereas the ERIC (Education Resources Information Center) Thesaurus and MeSH (Medical
Subject Headings) both use the term Undocumented immigrants, and both are produced
by federal government agencies;

Whereas the ALA policy B.3 (Diversity) states that "ALA recognizes the critical need for access
to library and information resources, services, and technologies by all people, especially
those who may experience' discrimination on the basis of appearance, ethnicity,
imigrant status...;" and

Whereas the ALA policy B.1.1 (Core Values of Librarianship) states that all library users should
receive "accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests;" now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association
urges the Library of Congress to change the subject heading Illegal aliens to Undocumented
immigrants.

Mark moved to endorse, Al seconded.