



Resolution in Support of Broadband as a Human Right

Whereas broadband networks and services drive robust, resilient, and effective societies and economies;

Whereas broadband is essential for life tasks including education, workforce, healthcare, and is a fundamental element of an inclusive and sustainable world;

Whereas the global pandemic has heightened the awareness of the problems that the lack of access to broadband and digital connectivity have on millions of Americans forced to work from home, connect to online schooling, connect to telehealth resources, access information and maintain a reasonable quality of life;

Whereas the inability to provide in-person library services during the pandemic magnifies inequities for people without the equipment, the capacity to access and the confidence/skills to effectively use broadband and acquire digital literacy;

Whereas access to information must be "predictable, sustainable, [and] location-independent" is a principle of the Networked World (B.4.6.1);

Whereas communities of color, low-income residents, rural, indigenous, older residents, people with disabilities, and people experiencing homelessness are more likely to be without a strong connection to the internet and without the equipment and skills to access reliable resources;

Whereas America's libraries provide no-fee broadband access in communities and are essential to communities with no broadband access;

Whereas an increasing number of information resources, including government resources and services, are available solely online;

Whereas ALA has endorsed legislation promoting broadband access, including for low-income and *Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC)* households and families with school-aged children who lack home internet access;

Whereas the American Library Association (ALA) states in "Access to Electronic Information Services, and Networks" (B.2.1.20) that "all individuals have a right to information";

Whereas ALA signed the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions' (IFLA) *Library Pledge to Promote Digital Inclusion* (<https://www.ifla.org/node/93389>) recognizing that universal connectivity requires collective, collaborative efforts from all stakeholders across all levels of government (B.6.2.3); and

Whereas the Committee on Legislation (COL) identified broadband as a priority in its 2021 Legislative Agenda; (<http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/committees/ALA%20Legislative%20Agenda%202021.pdf>) now, therefore be it,



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

1. affirms universal access to affordable high-capacity broadband is as essential as electricity and therefore a basic right for all; and,
2. advocates for legislative and regulatory policies through which libraries can affect positive change toward such universal access.

*Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
Monday, January 25, 2021, ALA Virtual Midwinter Council Meeting*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracie Hall", written in a cursive style.

Tracie D. Hall, Executive Director and
Secretary of the ALA Council