

## 53.12

At the 2010 ALA Midwinter Meeting, on recommendation by the Policy Monitoring Committee, the ALA Council revised 53.12, Threats to Library Materials Related to Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation, by deleting the word "affirms" and replacing it with the word "supports"; deleting the words "gender identity" from the first and second sentences of the policy, and inserting the phrase "gender identity or expression" following the words "sexual orientation." The policy would now read:

### **53.12 Threats to Library Materials Related to Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation**

The American Library Association supports the inclusion in library collections of materials that reflect the diversity of our society, including those related to sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression. ALA encourages all American Library Association chapters to take active stands against all legislative or other government attempts to proscribe materials related to sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression; and encourages all libraries to acquire and make available materials representative of all the people in our society. Adopted, 2005, Amended 2009. (See "Policy Reference File": Resolution on Threats to Library Materials Related to Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation, 2004-2005 ALA CD#57)

NOTE TO READER: The following was taken from the Policy Monitoring Committee Report, 2009-2010 ALA CD#17, Items #7.1-7.4. Terminology regarding gender identity.

It has come to PMC's attention that within the Policy Manual there is variation in language used to describe the concepts of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, etc. Differences in terminology appear to arise primarily from the accepted terminology in use at the time individual policies were passed, rather than from any intended difference in scope. Nevertheless, PMC is concerned that the differences in wording might be interpreted as defining limitations to the scope of particular policies, and believes that to the extent possible, a single term should be used. GLBTRT has advised PMC that the current preferred terminology is "gender identity or expression" and recommends that whenever the Policy Manual specifies "sexual orientation," it should immediately be followed by "gender identity or expression, and where "gender identification" currently appears by itself (usually before "sexual orientation"), it should be removed and "gender identity or expression" should immediately follow "sexual orientation."

The above recommended language changes were made in ALA policies: 9.2, Affiliation with other Organizations; 53.1.15, Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation; 54.3, Equal Employment Opportunity; and 53.12, Threats to Library Materials Related to Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation.

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At the 2005 ALA Annual Conference, Councilors Carolyn Caywood, IFRT Councilor and K.R. Roberto, Councilor-at-Large, Council adopted 2004-2005 ALA CD#57 Revised.

At the 2006 ALA Midwinter Meeting, on recommendation by the Council Policy Monitoring Committee, Council added into the ALA Policy Manual, the following abstract for Policy 53.12, Threats to Library Materials Related to Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation:

The American Library Association affirms the inclusion in library collections of materials that reflect the diversity of our society, including those related to sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. ALA encourages all American Library Association chapters to take active stands against all legislative or other government attempts to proscribe materials related to sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation; and encourages all libraries to acquire and make available materials representative of all the people in our society.

Resolution on  
Threats to Library Materials Related to Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation

WHEREAS, some elected officials of federal, state, and local governments have proposed to restrict or prohibit access to materials related to sexual orientation within their publicly funded libraries; and

WHEREAS, fair and equal representation of all the diverse expressions of life of the citizens of these United States is protected by the First Amendment and by state constitutions, and attempts to proscribe such representation in publicly funded libraries violates freedom of speech; and

WHEREAS, libraries serve "all people of the community the library serves," and "materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval" (Policy 53.1, "Library Bill of Rights"); and

WHEREAS, "Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored" (Policy 53.1.11, "Diversity in Collection Development"); and

WHEREAS, "The American Library Association stringently and unequivocally maintains that libraries and librarians have an obligation to resist efforts that systematically exclude materials dealing with any subject matter, including sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation" (Policy 53.1.15, "Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation"); and

WHEREAS, libraries have an obligation under the Library Bill of Rights to disseminate information representing all points of view on the topic of gay rights (Policy 54.17, "Gay Rights"); and

WHEREAS, the American Library Association is committed to combating prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination against individuals and groups in library services because of sexual orientation (Policy 60.2, "Combating Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination"); and

WHEREAS, "Libraries are a traditional forum for the open exchange of information. Attempts to restrict access to library materials violate the basic tenets of the Library Bill of Rights" (Policy 53.1.6, "Restricted Access to Library Materials"); and

WHEREAS, the American Library Association recognizes the right and responsibility of parents to pass on their values by monitoring their child's access to library materials; and,

WHEREAS, the American Library Association affirms the important role of local library boards, librarians, and library workers as promoters of the American values of inclusiveness, tolerance, and mutual respect within their communities; now, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the American Library Association affirm the inclusion in library collections of materials that reflect the diversity of our society, including those related to sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation; and, BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the American Library Association encourage all American Library Association ~~state~~ chapters to take active stands against all legislative or other government attempts to proscribe materials related to sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation; and, BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the American Library Association encourage all libraries to acquire and make available materials representative of all the people in our society.

Originating Units:

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Round Table and Intellectual Freedom Round Table

Moved: Carolyn Caywood, IFRT Councilor (ccaywood@vbgov.com)

Seconded: K. R. Roberto, Councilor At Large (kroberto@uga.edu)

ENDORSEMENTS BY ALA UNITS AND/OR COMMITTEES (IF ANY):

Endorsed by the Intellectual Freedom Committee, the Social Responsibilities Round Table, and the Social Responsibilities Round Table Feminist Task Force.