



RESOLUTION ENSURING INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND THE RIGHT TO PEACEFULLY ASSEMBLE AT ALA CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

Whereas ALA is widely known as a strong advocate for intellectual freedom and “intellectual freedom is a core value of the library profession, and a basic right in our democratic society.” (ALA Issues & Advocacy: Intellectual Freedom: Issues and Resources <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom>);

Whereas, The Universal Right to Free Expression: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights states, “Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government [and] Freedom of expression encompasses the freedoms of speech, press, religion, assembly, and association;” (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/universalright>);

Whereas, the establishment of any policies governing internal free speech and assembly during ALA conferences and meetings must uphold the values of intellectual freedom, free expression, and peaceful assembly;

Whereas, any policies restricting freedoms of expression during ALA conferences and meetings should be implemented only after wide consultation throughout the Association;

Whereas, the ALA Conference Services Office recently posted additional language in the “Statement on Appropriate Conduct at ALA Conferences” establishing a free speech zone called “The Square” during ALA conferences and meetings;

Whereas, the additional language about “The Square” had not been widely shared across ALA before being added to the “Statement on Appropriate Conduct at ALA Conferences;”

Whereas, the “Square” language was quickly removed due to membership opposition to such an abruptly imposed and restrictive policy;

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

1. requires that the ALA Council approve all internal restrictions to First Amendment rights at all ALA events proposed by all ALA offices, ALA committees, or other ALA bodies.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
Sunday, January 26, 2020, in Philadelphia, PA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary W. Ghikas".

Mary W. Ghikas, Executive Director and
Secretary of the ALA Council