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Resolution 94-12

ACCESS TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

WHEREAS, the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), which is scheduled to be reauthorized by Congress next year, provides public libraries with federal funds for projects or construction; and

WHEREAS, individuals who are blind or visually impaired have a right to fully enjoy and use their local public libraries; and

WHEREAS, libraries are likely to become one of the centerpieces of the new information infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, several steps could be taken to expand collections, ensure access to information and otherwise encourage use of libraries by individuals who are blind or visually impaired;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled at Chicago, Illinois, this 8th day of July, 1994, that this organization urge Congress to amend the Library Services and Construction Act as follows in order to ensure that the needs of library users who are blind or visually impaired are addressed:

1. establish standards which ensure that new information technology (from Internet hookups and collection databases to the equipment necessary to use these services) is accessible to and usable by individuals with a variety of disabling conditions;
2. encourage the development of collections which include a variety of resources and media, including audio recordings, large print material, and described videos;

3. foster the provision of information about library and community services to the public through both analog (telephone) and digital (electronic) means;

4. direct that persons with disabilities, including individuals with visual impairments, be included on library advisory committees;

5. ensure that the availability of public transportation is considered in determining a site for the construction or expansion of a public library;

6. develop innovative outreach programs whose express purpose is to encourage participation in the services and activities of public libraries by people with disabilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to Congressional oversight committees for libraries, the President of the American Library Association, the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, and other entities deemed appropriate.

Adopted.

Patricia L. Price, Secretary