

Resolution on the USA PATRIOT Act

WHEREAS an informed citizenry is essential to the success of a democratic society, and

WHEREAS to this purpose, citizens require not only access to informational resources but also the freedom to engage in lawful inquiry without fear of governmental surveillance or investigation, and

WHEREAS provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act and the revised Attorney General's Guidelines to the Federal Bureau of Investigation strengthened the ability of governmental agencies to investigate both citizens and non-citizens, to engage in surveillance, and to threaten civil rights and liberties guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, and

WHEREAS libraries are a primary means to enable the free flow and unimpeded distribution of information to the citizenry, and

WHEREAS library users, because of the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act and the establishment of other related policies, are under increased risk of being subjected to unwarranted surveillance and investigation, including covert monitoring of computer use for online access and email, and

WHEREAS such surveillance and investigation may, by provision of the USA PATRIOT Act, be concealed from those who have been subjected to it, as well as the general public, therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Idaho Library Association endorses the resolution of the American Library Association concerning the USA PATRIOT Act, and commends it for taking a firm stand in defense of libraries and their patrons, and be it further

RESOLVED that the Idaho Library Association opposes any use of government power to suppress or impede the free and open exchange of information or to intimidate those who engage in free inquiry, and further be it

RESOLVED that the Idaho Library Association encourages all librarians, library administrators, and library government bodies to

- 1) educate library users about the USA PATRIOT Act and the dangers it poses to the privacy rights of library patrons, and
- 2) adopt and implement patron privacy and record retention policies that seek to maximize the protection of those rights, and be it further

RESOLVED that the Idaho Library Association urges the U.S. Congress to oversee the implementation of the USA PATRIOT Act in order to prevent infringement of the people's privacy rights or impediments to their access to information, and that it amend or strike those sections of the Act that lend themselves to abuse by governmental agencies, and be it further

RESOLVED that this resolution be forwarded to the President of the United States, to the Attorney General of the United States, to the Idaho delegation of the United States Congress, to the Governor of the State of Idaho, and to the Boards of Trustees of public libraries in Idaho.

Adopted 8 April 2003 by the Executive Board
Idaho Library Association
To be considered 3 October 2003 by the general membership
Idaho Library Association