

Resolution in Opposition to Charging Prisoners to Read

Whereas the Prisoners' right to read. An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights declares that equitable access to information should be provided for people with disabilities and the denial of intellectual freedom the right to read to write and to think demonstrates the human spirit of those segregated from society and

Whereas the Access to Library Resources and Services document articulates the importance of providing access to resources to every member of the community particularly in light of existing socioeconomic racial ethnic and other inequities any of which are exacerbated by the penal system and

Whereas people entering a prison will be charged cents per minute to access free books on e-readers following a search for profit programs that exist in New York Pennsylvania Ohio and other states and

Whereas these per minute charges are particularly unfair to prisoned people who are emergent readers or who have printed disabilities like dyslexia or low vision and

Whereas these charges mean that the average cost of reading a single free book such as *1984* is close to what prisoned people's wages if any are paid are less than 1¢ per day and

Whereas these for profit programs are provided access to prison space and resources which could instead be used for libraries and the free services they provide including services that promote increased access to higher education programs which have been proven to help reduce recidivism
now therefore be it

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

- 1. Condemns the existence of for-profit programs that charge incarcerated people for access to reading material and acknowledges such programs only serve to deepen existing inequities barring

Add t on a ssues not spec f ca y addressed n the word ng of the reso ut on nc ude,

Once secur ty s threatened everyone loses access

ferences removed at the request of the resolutions Committee

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/ntfreedom/library/interpretations/prisoners/ghtoread>
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/ntfreedom/access>