# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# 2003 RESOLUTIONS

# SUMMARY OF 2003 RESOLUTIONS

**This publication reflects only those resolutions which were adopted by the convention. ACB resolutions which were referred to other ACB entities for further consideration, tabled or withdrawn are not included in this document.)**

**Resolution 2003-01 urges all airlines to make their web sites accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired.**

**Resolution 2003-03 expresses its gratitude to Hallmark Cards for the interest it has taken in making braille greeting cards available and for its sensitivity in marketing these products and requests that Hallmark Cards inform its store and franchise managers that braille greeting cards are available.**

**Resolution 2003-05 urges the officers and directors of the American Council of the Blind to respectfully consider any affiliate’s right to take a position other than that of the national organization, but not to delay or postpone advocacy efforts based on achieving consensus between that affiliate and the national organization or between affiliates.**

**Resolution 2003-06 instructs the officers and board of directors of the American Council of the Blind to send a letter to the United States Department of Justice, within 30 days of the adoption of this resolution, in support of the complaint of Guide Dog Users, Inc. against the Iowa Department for the Blind, and provides that the leadership of this organization make decisions and take actions that recognize the rights of guide dogs and their handlers to unhindered access to public programs, services and facilities.**

**Resolution 2003-07 places on record understanding of the factors that led to the decision taken in the Stephanie Dohmen matter, and affirms support for efforts to assure that guide dogs and their handlers have access to all public programs, services and facilities where required by law.**

**Resolution 2003-08 expresses appreciation to all volunteers who worked to assist attendees at the 2003 ACB convention and requests that Volunteer Coordinator Margarine Beaman assist in communicating the sense of this resolution to all volunteers.**

**Resolution 2003-09 expresses thanks and appreciation for the services and accommodations provided to ACB members by the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, the Westin Convention Center Hotel, and the Pittsburgh Hilton and Towers Hotel and their staffs.**

**Resolution 2003-10 thanks and commends the host committee and the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind for their fine work on the 2003 ACB convention.**

**Resolution 2003-11 calls upon the United States Supreme Court and the Judicial Conference of the United States to adopt disability anti-discrimination guidelines applicable to the federal courts which are modeled upon the appropriate provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and the Title II ADA regulations; recommends that the requested disability anti-discrimination guidelines should include the principle of equal access for the disabled contained in the recently strengthened Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act in order that all web sites maintained and utilized by the federal courts will be accessible to blind and visually impaired parties, attorneys, and members of the general public; urges that the requested disability anti-discrimination guidelines provide that all federal courts make substantive documents and exhibits available in formats that accommodate the needs of parties, attorneys, and members of the general public who are blind or visually impaired, giving primary consideration to the alternate format or service requested, and instructs ACB officers and staff to forward this resolution to the United States Supreme Court, the Judicial Conference of the United States and the National Council on Disability.**

**Resolution 2003-12 urges the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and the United States Ambassador to the United Nations to withdraw opposition to a proposed treaty on disability rights.**

**Resolution 2003-13 opposes provisions weakening the Randolph-Sheppard priority contained in the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2004.**

**Resolution 2003-14 supports the immediate installation of remote infrared audible signs in the transportation system of Washington, D.C. as a model to demonstrate that it is possible to provide, through the use of these signs, travel independence to people who are blind or visually impaired, and urges ACB state affiliates to advocate for the use of remote infrared audible signs by transit systems in their states.**

**Resolution 2003-15 urges manufacturers and developers of cellular equipment to acknowledge that much additional work is needed to design and market cellular telephones which provide access to all available features on the equipment for all disability groups, and to comply with this readily achievable, legally codified requirement; specifically urges manufacturers and developers to continue work on improvements which will make cellular telephones more easily and thoroughly compatible with hearing aids, and which will offer access to on-screen information; urges that access accommodations be designed as standard operational parts of equipment, rather than as add-on or peripheral features; encourages states that have telecommunications equipment distribution programs to expand those programs to additionally provide equipment or grants to assist people who have disabilities with the acquisition of devices for cellular telephone access; strongly encourages telecommunications equipment distribution programs to ensure that people who are blind or visually impaired are eligible for these programs; and encourages states which do not currently have telecommunications equipment distribution programs to develop such systems in accordance with service and eligibility criteria set forth in this resolution.**

**Resolution 2003-16 commends the ACB officers, board of directors, and staff, and others for filing a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) under Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 seeking to require that manufacturers develop and market cellular phones that have features that are accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired, and commends those manufacturers of cellular phones who have begun to work with ACB to explore means by which their products can be made accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired.**

**Resolution 2003-17 calls upon providers of cellular telephone services to make directory assistance available free of charge to people who are blind or visually impaired as many local land-line telephone service providers currently do.**

**Resolution 2003-18 directs the officers, board of directors, and staff of the American Council of the Blind to take all actions necessary to ensure that the reauthorization of TEA-21 contains significant increases in funding levels for public transit and other transportation programs that benefit people who are blind and visually impaired; urges all state and special-interest affiliates to assist the national staff in advocating for a favorable reauthorization of TEA-21; and instructs the ACB executive director to submit a report to the president, the board of directors, and the transportation task force, detailing the outcome of ACB efforts related to the reauthorization of the act.**

**Resolution 2003-19 urges the United States Postal Service to design and issue a stamp in honor of Louis Braille to commemorate the 200th anniversary of his birth in 2009, and that this stamp be designed in such a manner as to reflect the invention of braille, which has afforded blind people around the world an increased opportunity for literacy.**

**Resolution 2003-21 directs the officers, directors, and staff of the American Council of the Blind to design, create and present, for inclusion in the permanent memorial in Shanksville, Pa., an appropriate remembrance, on behalf of the American Council of the Blind and all Americans who are blind or visually impaired, of the heroes on Flight 93 who perished on September 11, 2001 along with other victims of the tragedy.**

**Resolution 2003-22 commends Sen. John McCain for his leadership and cooperation in striving to restore vital information access for Americans who are blind and visually impaired, through the inclusion of Section 9 of S. 1264, which seeks reinstatement of the FCC video-description rule, and urges all members of Congress and President George W. Bush to enact Senate Bill 1264 with Section 9 remaining as currently proposed.**

**Resolution 2003-23 vigorously opposes any attempt to repeal or otherwise adversely affect the priority for licensed blind vendors contained in Section 111(2) of the Surface Transportation Act (the Kennelly Amendment); calls upon all members of Congress to affirmatively protect and guarantee the continued existence and inclusion of the Kennelly Amendment’s priority provisions in any enacted reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act; and instructs its officers, board of directors and staff to transmit this resolution to all appropriate members of Congress.**

**Resolution 2003-24 urges the Department of Veterans Affairs to make policy changes enabling the option for provision of retraining on computers through qualified local providers as well as through traditional VA program(s).**

**Resolution 2003-25 urges the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) to assure that the name of the specific magazine be made more visually discernible on each cassette by enlarging and emboldening the print; urges NLS to increase the readability of the magazine title on the mailer by enlarging the print while providing high visual contrast; and provides that the American Council of the Blind's own magazine mailings shall follow similar procedures to maximize the visual readability of the cassette magazine titles.**

**Resolution 2003-26 urges those preparing motion picture DVDs for release for sale to include a descriptive video track when it is available, and urges those preparing the packaging for DVDs to include a clear label in a standard location on the box which alerts the potential customer to the availability of video description.**

**Resolution 2003-27 makes the following recommendations to the board of directors of the American Library Association (ALA): 1. That the ALA board publish a document reminding all of the standard-setting bodies working under the aegis of the American Library Association to incorporate into their standards elements that reaffirm the obligation of public libraries to make their collections, catalogs, and programs accessible to all people with disabilities, especially to individuals who are blind or visually impaired; 2. that the ALA board convey the concern of the American Council of the Blind and of Library Users of America that many of the catalogs, electronic books (e-books) and other new technological approaches that are broadening the range of media available at public libraries are not incorporating standards that will make them easily available to patrons who are blind or visually impaired; and 3. that the ALA board prepare a resolution for submission to its membership that clearly serves notice to the developers of catalog interfaces, e-books and other new technologies that the ability of blind and disabled people to utilize such products must be an absolute requirement in determining which products or media to purchase, and strongly urges its officers, board of directors and staff, along with Library Users of America, to take all steps necessary to actively assist the American Library Association in implementing the objectives in this resolution.**

**Resolution 2003-28 directs the president of the American Council of the Blind to prepare a document for ACB’s information access committee outlining the current problems of creating e-books that are fully accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired, directs the committee to prepare a report outlining the efforts that need to be taken to ensure that e-book technology can be fully and comfortably accessed by users who are blind or visually impaired, and to deliver this report to the president by the end of 2003; directs the committee to develop a set of priorities and positions concerning this issue, and to make such recommendations available to the manufacturers of the various e-book formats; directs this committee to communicate with those bodies currently engaged in developing standards for e-book platforms, to be certain that they incorporate into those standards means by which screen readers and braille displays can access e-books notwithstanding the need for protection schemes that safeguard the intellectual property incorporated into e-books; and directs the committee to report to the 2004 meeting of Library Users of America on the progress they have made by that time.**

**Resolution 2003-29 opposes all efforts to delay purchase of accessible voting equipment because of unfounded and unsubstantiated security concerns about the integrity of ballots cast on DRE voting systems.**

**Resolution 2003-30 seeks the inclusion of provisions in highway funding legislation which would provide funds to transit agencies for installing detectable warnings at all transit station platforms.**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-01

**Urges all airlines to make their websites accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired.**

**WHEREAS, a recent federal district court decision held that the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 did not require airline websites to be accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired; and**

**WHEREAS, airlines offer reduced fares and expanded scheduling options to customers who purchase tickets online which are not available to other customers; and**

**WHEREAS, some airline websites are difficult, if not impossible, for people who are blind or visually impaired to use, thereby preventing them from having independent access to these reduced fares and schedules;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization urge all airlines to make their websites accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL Of THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-03

**Expresses its gratitude to Hallmark Cards for the interest it has taken in this matter and for its sensitivity in marketing braille greeting cards, and requests that Hallmark Cards inform its store and franchise managers that braille greeting cards are available.**

**WHEREAS, braille greeting cards, and whereas, the sending and receiving of greeting cards to celebrate important occasions is one of the courtesies and pleasures of life; and**

**WHEREAS, people who are blind or visually impaired have found it difficult or impossible to share in this pleasure because they have been unable to read printed greeting cards; and**

**WHEREAS, Hallmark Cards has recognized and addressed this problem by producing greeting cards in braille; and**

**WHEREAS, having these cards available in Hallmark stores throughout the country, rather than in very limited quantities through special agencies serving the blind and visually impaired, ensures that braille greeting cards can be purchased readily;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization expresses its gratitude to Hallmark Cards for the interest it has taken in this matter and for its sensitivity in marketing braille greeting cards; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization requests that Hallmark Cards inform its store and franchise managers that braille greeting cards are available.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-05

**Urges the officers and directors of the American Council of the Blind to respectfully consider any affiliate’s right to take a position other than that of the national organization, but not to delay or postpone advocacy efforts based on achieving consensus between that affiliate and the national organization or between affiliates.**

**WHEREAS, the board of directors and the national office of the American Council of the Blind advocate on behalf of people who are blind or visually impaired in matters of rights, access to public facilities and services, and equal participation in society; and**

**WHEREAS, these individuals may or may not be affiliated with local chapters or state or special interest affiliates of the American Council of the Blind; and**

**WHEREAS, ACB, in advocating for those seeking assistance with respect to the welfare, rights and equal participation in society of people who are blind or visually impaired, may find that its advocacy activities conflict with the position of an affiliate which is directed y such activities; and**

**WHEREAS, ACB recognizes and appreciates that, at times, sensitive relationships may affect an affiliate’s position on an issue of advocacy; and**

**WHEREAS, it has ordinarily been the practice of ACB to strive for consensus when its position differs from that of an affiliate or when two affiliates take differing positions; and**

**WHEREAS, in the past, this perceived need for consensus has been viewed as hindering or inhibiting the national organization from taking action to benefit people who are blind or visually impaired; and**

**WHEREAS, participation of a national organization such as ACB may lend more credence to an individual’s or affiliate’s advocacy activities; and**

**WHEREAS, the document “Affiliate and National Organization Expectations,” as adopted by the ACB Board of Directors in 2000, assures affiliates a means of expressing differences of opinion and position from that of the national organization without reprisal or retaliatory action;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization urges its officers and directors to respectfully consider any affiliate’s right to take a position other than that of the national organization, but not to delay or postpone advocacy efforts based on achieving consensus between that affiliate and the national organization or between affiliates.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-06

**Instructs the officers and board of directors of the American Council of the Blind to send a letter to the United States Department of Justice, within thirty days of the adoption of this resolution, in support of the complaint of Guide Dog Users, Inc., and provides that the leadership of this organization make decisions and take actions that recognize the right of guide dogs and their handlers to unhindered access to public programs, services and facilities.**

**WHEREAS, the use of a guide dog as an effective mobility aid is a legitimate choice for a person who is blind or visually impaired; and**

**WHEREAS, applicable federal disability rights laws guarantee access for persons using guide dogs in public programs; and**

**WHEREAS, American Council of the Blind Resolution 1979-09 represents a 24-year commitment opposing discrimination against guide dog users by service providers; and**

**WHEREAS, agencies continue to engage in unlawful discrimination against guide dog users; and**

**WHEREAS, this unlawful practice was demonstrated by the actions of the Iowa Department for the Blind in refusing to provide program access to on-site rehabilitation services to Ms. Stephanie Dohmen because she intended to use her guide dog while training at the Iowa Orientation Center for the Blind; and**

**WHEREAS, Guide Dog Users Incorporated, with the support of numerous guide dog schools, filed a complaint with the United States Department of Justice on Ms. Dohmen’s behalf; and**

**WHEREAS, it is the affirmative duty of the American Council of the Blind to advocate for the civil rights of guide dog users;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 9th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization instructs its officers and board of directors to send a letter to the United States Department of Justice, within thirty days of the adoption of this resolution, in support of the complaint of Guide Dog Users, Inc.; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED henceforth, that the leadership of this organization make decisions and take actions that recognize the right of guide dogs and their handlers to unhindered access to public programs, services and facilities.**

**Adopted**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-07

**Places on record its understanding of the factors that led to the decision taken in the Stephanie Dohmen matter, and affirms its support for efforts to assure that guide dogs and their handlers have access to all public programs, services and facilities where required by law.**

**WHEREAS, the American Council of the Blind has a long history both of respecting the opinions of its affiliates and of taking action when civil rights issues have clearly transcended the concerns of individual affiliates; and**

**WHEREAS, a majority of those meeting on November 25, 2002, to advise the president about the Iowa guide dog issue recommended that ACB not sign on to the Department of Justice complaint then being contemplated by Guide Dog Users, Inc.; and**

**WHEREAS, one reason for this unwillingness was that there did not appear to be sufficient, clear information on the case; and**

**WHEREAS, another factor was that two complaints had already been filed in Iowa which had not yet been adjudicated; and**

**WHEREAS, some of those present expressed the view that clear direction was not provided by previous ACB resolutions on this particular issue; and**

**WHEREAS, another factor may have been a request from the Iowa Council of the United Blind, an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind, that the national organization refrain from signing on until issues had been given an opportunity to be resolved in the state where this matter arose; and**

**WHEREAS, though it was recommended to the president that ACB not sign on to the Department of Justice complaint, it was nevertheless recommended by unanimous motion that the ACB provide all appropriate support to our Guide Dog Users, Inc. affiliate in their efforts to intervene in this issue; and**

**WHEREAS, subsequent to the adoption of this position, the national office and others within the organization devoted substantial effort to assist GDUI;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 9th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that this organization places on record its understanding of the factors that led to the decision taken in this matter; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization affirm its support for efforts to assure that guide dogs and their handlers have access to all public programs, services and facilities where required by law.**

**Adopted**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-08

**Warmly and most sincerely expresses its appreciation to all volunteers who worked to assist the attendees of the 2003 ACB convention and requests yet one more accommodation from Volunteer Coordinator Ms. Margarine Beaman, that being to assist in communicating this resolution, or its sense, to all volunteers.**

**WHEREAS, volunteers, under the most able stewardship of Volunteer Coordinator, Margarine Beaman, have provided superb services in all ways to attendees of the 2003 American Council of the Blind (ACB) convention**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization warmly and most sincerely expresses its appreciation to all volunteers who worked to assist the attendees of the 2003 ACB convention, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization requests yet one more accommodation from Ms. Beaman, that being to assist in communicating this resolution, or its sense, to all volunteers.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-09

**Expresses ACB’s thanks and appreciation for the services and accommodations provided to its members by the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, the Westin Convention Center Hotel, and the Pittsburgh Hilton and Towers Hotel and their staffs.**

**WHEREAS, the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, the Westin Convention Center Hotel, and the Pittsburgh Hilton and Towers Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, have provided essential services and important accommodations to the members of the American Council of the Blind (ACB) attending its 2003 convention; and**

**WHEREAS, the staffs of David L. Lawrence Convention Center, the Westin Convention Center Hotel, and the Pittsburgh Hilton and Towers Hotel have been friendly and helpful; and**

**WHEREAS, the success of a convention is dependent upon the quality of the services provided by the convention center and hotels;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization expresses its thanks and appreciation for the services and accommodations provided to its members by the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, the Westin Convention Center Hotel, and the Pittsburgh Hilton and Towers Hotel and their staffs.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-10

**ACB wholeheartedly thanks and commends the host committee and the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind for their fine work on the 2003 ACB convention.**

**WHEREAS, the handling of local arrangements for an American Council of the Blind (ACB) national convention is a mammoth undertaking; and**

**WHEREAS, the host committee and ACB members in the state of Pennsylvania have met every challenge in hosting the 2003 ACB national convention in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, and have welcomed and assisted ACB members in a friendly, helpful, and grand fashion,**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization wholeheartedly thanks and commends the host committee and the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind for their fine work.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-11

**Calls upon the United States Supreme Court and the Judicial Conference of the United States to adopt disability anti-discrimination guidelines applicable to the federal courts which are modeled upon the appropriate provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and the Title II ADA regulations, recommends that the requested disability anti-discrimination guidelines should include the principle of equal access for the disabled contained in the recently strengthened Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act in order that all websites maintained and utilized by the federal courts will be accessible to blind and visually impaired parties, attorneys, and members of the general public, urges that the requested disability anti-discrimination guidelines provide that all federal courts make substantive documents and exhibits available as a reasonable accommodation or auxiliary aid or service to parties, attorneys, and members of the general public who are blind or visually impaired, giving primary consideration to the alternate format or service requested, and instructs its officers and staff to forward this resolution to the United States Supreme Court, the Judicial Conference of the United States and the National Council on Disability.**

**WHEREAS, federal disability rights statutes currently fail to cover the federal courts; and**

**WHEREAS, laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title V of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ultimately require individuals who are blind, visually impaired and/or otherwise disabled to resort to the federal courts to advocate for and enforce their federally protected disability civil rights; and**

**WHEREAS, those same federal courts to which these individuals must resort are, with few exceptions, inaccessible to, and therefore unusable by individuals with disabilities; and**

**WHEREAS, the continuing inaccessibility of the federal courts to blind and disabled claimants and attorneys creates an intolerable barrier to the assertion of federally guaranteed disability civil rights;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization calls upon the United States Supreme Court and the Judicial Conference of the United States to adopt disability anti-discrimination guidelines applicable to the federal courts which are modeled upon the appropriate provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and the Title II ADA regulations, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization strongly recommends that the requested disability anti-discrimination guidelines should include the principle of equal access for the disabled contained in the recently strengthened Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act in order that all websites maintained and utilized by the federal courts will be accessible to blind and visually impaired parties, attorneys, and members of the general public, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization strongly urges that the requested disability anti-discrimination guidelines provide that all federal courts make substantive documents and exhibits available as a reasonable accommodation or auxiliary aid or service to parties, attorneys, and members of the general public who are blind or visually impaired, giving primary consideration to the alternate format or service requested, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization instructs its officers and staff to forward this resolution to the United States Supreme Court, the Judicial Conference of the United States and the National Council on Disability.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-12

**Urges the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and the United States Ambassador to the United Nations to withdraw their opposition to a proposed treaty on disability rights.**

**WHEREAS, although international treaties exist which address numerous aspects of human rights, no such treaty sets forth the rights of people with disabilities; and**

**WHEREAS, delegates to the United Nations are currently drafting a treaty that will address the rights of people with disabilities; and**

**WHEREAS, although this treaty is not expected to take effect until early 2007, indications are that it is meeting with almost universal international acclaim; and**

**WHEREAS, the only unequivocal opposition has come from the United States delegation to the United Nations, which has taken the position that every nation should have an exclusive right to design its own policies in the area of disability rights; and**

**WHEREAS, this position was taken over the strenuous objections of U.S. disability organizations represented at these treaty negotiations; and**

**WHEREAS, this view flies in the face of one of the basic tenets of our country, namely the sanctity of individual rights for all people, including people with disabilities,**

**NOW, THEREFRE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization urges the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and the United States Ambassador to the United Nations to withdraw their opposition to this proposed treaty.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-13

**Opposes provisions weakening the Randolph-Sheppard priority contained in the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2004.**

**WHEREAS, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004, H.R. 1588, has been passed by the United States House of Representatives and the Senate, and shortly is to be considered by a Committee of Conference to resolve the differences between the House and Senate bills; and**

**WHEREAS, the bill adopted by the Senate contains Section 368 (a) through (d), which is inimical to the interests of blind vendors throughout the nation because it undermines the priority for blind vending facilities; and**

**WHEREAS, the said provision would eliminate the priority assured by the Randolph-Sheppard Act for certain blind vending facilities on federal property for more than five years by allowing NISH contracts for military dining services awarded pursuant to the Javits-Wagner-O’Day Act to continue in defiance of the Randolph-Sheppard priority; and**

**WHEREAS, the bill adopted by the House does not contain a provision similar to Section 368 (a) through (d); and**

**WHEREAS, every federal court which has addressed the issue has determined that the Randolph-Sheppard Act’s priority is superior to the general preference accorded NISH procurements under the Javits-Wagner-O’Day Act,**

**NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization urges the Congressional Conference Committee on H.R. 1588 to remove from the bill to be sent to the President any provisions that would negatively affect the Randolph-Sheppard Act's priority, particularly Section 368 (a) through (d) of the Senate bill; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted forthwith to the Chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services, the Chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, the ranking minority member of each of these committees, and the members of the of the Commerce of Conference.**

**Adopted**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-14

**Supports the immediate installation of remote infrared audible signs in the transportation system of Washington, D.C. as a model to demonstrate to the world that it is possible to provide, through the use of these signs, travel independence to people who are blind or visually impaired, and urges its state affiliates to advocate for the use of remote infrared audible signs by transit systems in their states.**

**WHEREAS, various studies and extensive use have proven that remote infrared audible signs provide an effective wayfinding system which greatly enhances access to the built environment and to transportation facilities and vehicles for people who are blind or visually impaired; and**

**WHEREAS, remote infrared audible signs have been installed in many cities in the United States, Japan and Norway; and**

**WHEREAS, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind is installing these signs in its new headquarters in Toronto; and**

**WHEREAS, this organization has gone on record as supporting the use of this type of mobility aid; and**

**WHEREAS, the American National Standards Institute is publishing standards for these signs in its 2003 Standards Manual; and**

**WHEREAS, a major citywide installation providing portal to portal transportation accessibility would demonstrate the value of remote infrared audible signs as a vital mobility enhancement to users; and**

**WHEREAS, such an installation has been proposed for Washington, D.C.;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization support the immediate installation of remote infrared audible signs in the transportation system of Washington, D.C. as a model to demonstrate to the world that it is possible to provide, through the use of these signs, travel independence to people who are blind or visually impaired; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization urge its state affiliates to advocate for the use of remote infrared audible signs by transit systems in their states.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-15

**Urges manufacturers and developers of cellular equipment to acknowledge that much additional work is needed to design and market cellular telephones which truly provide access to all available features on the equipment for all disability groups, and to comply with this readily achievable, legally codified requirement; specifically urges manufacturers and developers to continue work on improvements which will make cellular telephones more easily and thoroughly compatible with hearing aids, and which will offer access to on-screen information; urges that access accommodations be designed as standard operational parts of equipment, rather than as add-on; or peripheral features; encourages states that have telecommunications equipment distribution programs to expand those programs to additionally provide equipment or grants to assist people who have disabilities with the acquisition of devices for cellular telephone access, strongly encourages telecommunications equipment distribution programs to ensure that people who are blind or visually impaired are eligible for these programs, and encourages states which do not currently have telecommunications equipment distribution programs to develop such distribution systems in accordance with service and eligibility criteria set forth in this resolution.**

**WHEREAS, for many individuals who are blind or visually impaired, cellular telephones are a necessity for independence and security; and**

**WHEREAS, many cellular telephones are not accessible or offer only limited accessibility to people who have vision and/or hearing impairments; and**

**WHEREAS, although Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 requires that a range of models of cellular telephones provide accessible features for people who have disabilities, many people who are blind, visually impaired, and/or hearing impaired find that the accessibility features currently available on cellular telephones do not work very well; and**

**WHEREAS, as accessibility features are improved in quality and capability, the cost for such features, as well as for peripheral attachments, will increase; and**

**WHEREAS, although Section 255 requires that a range of equipment be made available with accessibility features, none of the provisions in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 prevent manufacturers from assessing additional charges for such features; and**

**WHEREAS, this circumstance often results in people who have vision and/or hearing impairments having to pay more than their non-disabled counterparts for equipment to achieve the same telecommunications functions; and**

**WHEREAS, roughly 40 of the 50 states have telecommunications equipment distribution programs which assist people having at least certain disabilities to obtain equipment to achieve accessibility for in-home, wireline telephone service; and**

**WHEREAS, very few of the states which have such programs provide equipment grants to help with cellular access because cellular services are regarded by federal statutes, and some state implementing statutes, as being “enhanced” services;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that this organization urge manufacturers and developers of cellular equipment to acknowledge that much additional work is needed to design and market cellular telephones which truly provide access to all available features on the equipment for all disability groups, and to comply with this readily achievable, legally codified requirement; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization specifically urge manufacturers and developers to continue work on improvements which will make cellular telephones more easily and thoroughly compatible with hearing aids, and which will offer access to on-screen information; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization urge that access accommodations be designed as standard operational parts of equipment, rather than as add-on or peripheral features; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization encourage states that have telecommunications equipment distribution programs to expand those programs to additionally provide equipment or grants to assist people who have disabilities with the acquisition of devices for cellular telephone access, and**

**Be IT FURTHER RESOLVED that telecommunications equipment distribution programs are strongly encouraged to ensure that people who are blind or visually impaired are eligible for these programs; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization encourage states which do not currently have telecommunications equipment distribution programs to develop such distribution systems in accordance with service and eligibility criteria set forth in this resolution.**

**Adopted**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-16

**Commends the ACB officers, board of directors, and staff, and others for filing a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) under Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 seeking to require that manufacturers develop and market cellular phones that have features that are accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired, and commends those manufacturers of cellular phones who have begun to work with ACB to explore means by which their products can be made accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired.**

**WHEREAS, cellular phones are becoming an increasingly important part of the daily lives of everyone, including people who are blind or visually impaired; and**

**WHEREAS, cellular phones are essential to the safety and independence of many Americans who are blind and visually impaired; and**

**WHEREAS, some of the features on even the most basic cellular phones are inaccessible to people who are blind and visually impaired; and**

**WHEREAS, these features include, but are not limited to, status indicators, address books, text messaging, and volume and ringer controls; and**

**WHEREAS, the American Council of the Blind and other parties have filed a formal complaint with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) under Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 seeking to require that manufacturers develop and market cellular phones that have features that are accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that this organization commend the ACB officers, board of directors, and staff, and others for filing this complaint; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization commend those manufacturers of cellular phones who have begun to work with ACB to explore means by which their products can be made accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-17

**Calls upon providers of cellular telephone services to make directory assistance available free of charge to people who are blind or visually impaired as many local home telephone providers currently do.**

**WHEREAS, people who are blind or visually impaired often receive free directory assistance through their local home telephone provider; and**

**WHEREAS, such assistance enables people who are blind or visually impaired to access telephone numbers that they would otherwise be unable to obtain; and**

**WHEREAS, in general, providers of cellular telephone services do not provide free directory assistance,**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization call upon providers of cellular telephone services to make directory assistance available free of charge to people who are blind or visually impaired as many local home telephone providers currently do.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-18

**Directs the officers, board of directors, and staff of the American Council of the Blind to take all actions necessary to ensure that the reauthorization of TEA-21 contain significant increases in funding levels for public transit and other transportation programs that benefit the blind and visually impaired, urges all state and special-interest affiliates to assist the national staff in advocating for a favorable reauthorization of TEA-21, and instructs the ACB executive director to sub it a report to the president, the board of directors, and the transportation task force, detailing the outcome of ACB efforts related to the reauthorization of TEA-21.**

**WHEREAS, the Transportation Equity Act For the 21st Century (TEA-21) is the federal law which sets transportation funding priorities for the United States; and**

**WHEREAS, the funding allocations established within this law determine, to a large extent, the relative shares of federal funds which are allocated to a variety of transportation priorities, including, but not limited to: highway and road construction and maintenance, public transit project construction, public transit operations, rural transit and paratransit capital improvements and operations, alternative transportation program development and funding, and pedestrian access enhancements; and**

**WHEREAS, TEA-21 is scheduled for reauthorization during the current Congressional session; and**

**WHEREAS the proposed transportation reauthorization act, when enacted, will remain in effect for a six-year period; and**

**WHEREAS, it is unlikely that the transportation priorities and funding levels within this act would change significantly once the act is adopted; and**

**WHEREAS, current funding levels are insufficient for pedestrian access enhancements, public transportation, paratransit, rural transit or other alternative forms of transit for Americans who do not drive, including people who are blind or visually impaired; and**

**WHEREAS, while proposals by the Bush administration would provide limited increases in funding for rural transportation and senior/disabled transit programs, these proposed funding increases actually diminish the proportionate share of total transportation dollars allocable for those programs; and**

**WHEREAS, most Americans who do not drive, including those who are blind or visually impaired, would benefit directly from improvements to paratransit and public transit services;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that this organization directs its officers, board of directors, and staff to take all actions necessary to ensure that the reauthorization of TEA-21 contain significant increases in funding levels for public transit and other transportation programs that benefit the blind and visually impaired; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization urges all state and special interest affiliates to assist the national staff in advocating for a favorable reauthorization of TEA-21, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ACB executive director is instructed to submit a report to the president, the board of directors, and the transportation task force, detailing the outcome of ACB efforts related to the reauthorization of TEA-21.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-19

**Urges the United States Postal Service to design and issue a stamp in honor of Louis Braille to commemorate the 200th anniversary of his birth in 2009, and that this stamp be designed in such a manner as to reflect the invention of Braille, which has afforded blind people around the world an increased opportunity for literacy.**

**WHEREAS, in the early 19th century, people who were blind had limited opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge and skills; and**

**WHEREAS, those limited opportunities resulted largely from the fact that learning depended upon repetition and memorization; and**

**WHEREAS, because of this limited opportunity, most blind people were unable to achieve their maximum potential; and**

**WHEREAS, Louis Braille’s invention of a tactile reading and writing system enabled blind people to become literate; and**

**WHEREAS, this literacy has increased the potential of blind people around the world to pursue areas of employment previously believed to be available only to the sighted population,**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that this organization urge the United States Postal Service to design and issue a stamp in honor of Louis Braille to commemorate the 200th anniversary of his birth in 2009, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this stamp be designed in such a manner as to reflect the invention of Braille, which has afforded blind people around the world an increased opportunity for literacy.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-21

**Directs the officers, directors, and staff of the American Council of the Blind to design, create and present, for inclusion in the permanent memorial, an appropriate remembrance, on behalf of the American Council of the Blind and all Americans who are blind or visually impaired.**

**WHEREAS, during its 2003 convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, representatives of the American Council of the Blind visited the crash site of United Airlines Flight 93, which occurred on September 11, 2001; and**

**WHEREAS, it came to the attention of these members that many advocacy and philanthropic organizations have placed plaques and other commemorative items at the Flight 93 crash site; and**

**WHEREAS, a permanent memorial will be built on the crash site which will house these commemorative items,**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 9th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that this organization directs its officers, directors, and staff to design, create and present, for inclusion in the permanent memorial, an appropriate remembrance, on behalf of the American Council of the Blind and all Americans who are blind or visually impaired.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-22

**Commends Senator John McCain for his leadership and cooperation in striving to restore vital information access for Americans who are blind and visually impaired, through the inclusion of Section 9 of S. 1264, for reinstatement of the FCC video-description rule, and urges all members of Congress and President George W. Bush to enact Senate Bill 1264 with Section 9 remaining as currently proposed.**

**WHEREAS, in 2002, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted a rule requiring television networks, affiliated stations in the 25 largest markets in the United States, and cable providers serving over 50,000 subscribers, to provide at least 50 hours per quarter of video-described prime-time programming; and**

**WHEREAS, networks, stations and cable providers complying with the rule experienced minimal difficulty in doing so; and**

**WHEREAS, subsequent to implementation of the rule, the U.S. Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit, found that the FCC lacked regulatory authority to adopt rules requiring video description, thus nullifying the rule; and**

**WHEREAS, the American Council of the Blind (ACB) has long advocated for video description, and immediately following the court's decision began urging Congressional action to provide the FCC with the regulatory authority which the courts found to be absent under current law; and**

**WHEREAS, Senator John McCain (R-AZ) has responded to the requests of ACB and other advocates for video description by introducing language creating Section 9 of S. 1264, the Federal Communications Commission Reauthorization Act, which directs the FCC to reinstate the video description rule,**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 9th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization commend Senator John McCain for his leadership and cooperation in striving to restore vital information access for Americans who are blind and visually impaired, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization urges all members of Congress and President George W. Bush to enact Senate Bill 1264 with Section 9 remaining as currently proposed.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-23

**Vigorously opposes any attempt to repeal or otherwise adversely affect the priority for licensed blind vendors contained in Section 111(2) of the Surface Transportation Act (the Kennelly Amendment), calls upon all members of Congress to affirmatively protect and guarantee the continued existence and inclusion of the Kennelly Amendment's priority provisions in any enacted reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act, and instructs its officers, board of directors and staff to transmit this resolution to all appropriate members of Congress.**

**WHEREAS, legislation to reauthorize the Surface Transportation Act (TEA-21) is pending before the Congress; and**

**WHEREAS, Section 111(2) of the Surface Transportation Act (the Kennelly Amendment) provides to licensed blind vendors a priority to operate vending machines at rest stops on interstate highways; and**

**WHEREAS, the said Kennelly Amendment may be subjected to revision or outright repeal during reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act; and**

**WHEREAS, any attempt to rescind, limit, or circumscribe the Kennelly Amendment's priority provisions would constitute a threat to the continuing livelihood of many licensed blind vendors throughout the United States,**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization vigorously opposes any attempt to repeal or otherwise adversely affect the priority for licensed blind vendors contained in Section 111(2) of the Surface Transportation Act, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization calls upon all members of**

**Congress to affirmatively protect and guarantee the continued existence and inclusion of the Kennelly Amendment's priority provisions in any enacted reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization instructs its officers, board of directors and staff to transmit this resolution to all appropriate members of Congress.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-24

**Urges the Department of Veterans Affairs to make policy changes enabling the option for provision of retraining on computers through qualified local providers as well as through traditional VA program(s).**

**WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides accessible computer systems to blind veterans, generally through a residential program lasting 30 to 42 days; and**

**WHEREAS, upgraded accessible software bug fixes circulated by accessibility software companies often necessitate the acquisition of more powerful computer hardware; and**

**WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs requires veterans to return to its residential training program to obtain such upgrades and training to use them; and**

**WHEREAS, nine-to eighteen-month waiting lists for readmission and additional time away from home and family constitute hardships for blind veterans; and**

**WHEREAS, local options for retraining should be available in addition to the option of returning to a VA Blind Rehabilitation Center training program; and**

**WHEREAS, such training should be provided by trainers expert in the use of accessible technology for the blind;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization urges the Department of Veterans Affairs to make policy changes enabling the option for provision of such retraining through qualified local providers as well as through the traditional VA program; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such policies require provision for payment of local training costs through the VA Central Office.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-25

**Urges the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) to assure that the name of the specific magazine be made more visually discernible on each cassette by enlarging and emboldening the print, urges NLS to increase the readability of the magazine title on the mailer by enlarging the print while providing high visual contrast, and provides that the American Council of the Blind's own magazine mailings shall follow similar procedures to maximize the visual readability of the cassette magazine titles.**

**WHEREAS, many of the certified “print handicapped” subscribers receiving cassette magazines from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped are able to read large print; and**

**WHEREAS, many of those subscribers may receive multiple tape-recorded periodicals in identical or almost identical mailers; and**

**WHEREAS, these cassette tapes and their mailers contain blank space which would be available to increase the font size on print labels,**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization urges the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) to assure that the name of the specific magazine be made more visually discernible on each cassette by enlarging and emboldening the print; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization urges NLS increase the readability of the magazine title on the mailer by enlarging the print while providing high visual contrast; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the American Council of the Blind’s own magazine mailings shall follow similar procedures to maximize the visual readability of the cassette magazine titles.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-26

**Urges those preparing motion picture DVDs for release for sale to include a descriptive video track when it is available, and urges those preparing the packaging for DVDs to include a clear label in a standard location on the box which alerts the potential customer to the availability of video description.**

**WHEREAS, a substantial number of motion pictures with video description and closed captioning are being shown in theaters; and**

**WHEREAS, virtually all these movies are subsequently released for sale as DVDs; and**

**WHEREAS, most of these DVDs do not include the descriptive video track, but do contain closed captioning; and**

**WHEREAS, even when the release does contain a descriptive video track, this fact is not indicated on the packaging;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that this organization urges those preparing motion picture DVDs for release for sale to include a descriptive video track when it is available; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization also urges those preparing the packaging for DVDs to include a clear label in a standard location on the box which alerts the potential customer to the availability of video description.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-27

**Makes the following recommendations to the Board of Directors of the American Library Association (ALA): 1. That the ALA Board publish a document reminding all of the standard-setting bodies working under the aegis of the American Library Association to incorporate into their standards, elements that reaffirm the obligation of public libraries to make their collections, catalogs, and programs accessible to all people with disabilities, especially to individuals who are blind or visually impaired; 2. that the ALA Board convey the concern of the American Council of the Blind and of Library Users of America that many of the catalogues, electronic books (E-books) and other new technological approaches that are broadening the range of media available at public libraries are not incorporating standards that will make them easily available to patrons who are blind or visually impaired; and 3. that the ALA Board prepare a resolution for submission to its membership that clearly serves notice to the developers of catalog interfaces, E-books and other new technologies that the ability of blind and disabled people to utilize such products must be an absolute requirement in determining which products or media to purchase, and strongly urges its officers, board of directors and staff, along with Library Users of America, to take all steps necessary to actively assist the American Library Association in implementing the objectives in this resolution.**

**WHEREAS, the American Council of the Blind (ACB) is an organization of people who are blind or visually impaired with more than twenty thousand members throughout the United States; and**

**WHEREAS, Library Users of America is an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind dedicated to improving access to all kinds of library services for people who are blind and visually impaired; and**

**WHEREAS, the American Library Association is the primary professional organization of librarians and is dedicated to creating and promoting standards for library service that ensure the broadest access to libraries for the people of the United States;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that this organization joins with its affiliate, Library Users of America, in making the following recommendations to the Board of Directors of the American Library Association: 1. That the ALA Board publish a document reminding all of the standard-setting bodies working under the aegis of the American Library Association to incorporate into their standards elements that reaffirm the obligation of public libraries to make their collections, catalogs, and programs accessible to all people with disabilities, especially to individuals who are blind or visually impaired; 2. that the ALA Board convey the concern of the American Council of the Blind and of Library Users of America that many of the catalogs, electronic books (E-books) and other new technological approaches that are broadening the range of media available at public libraries are not incorporating standards that will make them easily available to patrons who are blind or visually impaired; and 3. that the ALA Board prepare a resolution for submission to its membership that clearly serves notice to the developers of catalog interfaces, E-books and other new technologies that the ability of blind and disabled people to utilize such products must be an absolute requirement in determining which products or media to purchase; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization strongly urges its officers, board of directors and staff, along with Library Users of America, to take all steps necessary to actively assist the American Library Association in implementing the objectives in this resolution.**

**Adopted**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-28

**Directs the President of the American Council of the Blind to prepare a document for ACB's information access committee outlining the current problems of creating E-books that are fully accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired; directs the information access committee to prepare a report outlining the efforts that need to be taken to ensure that E-book technology can be fully and comfortably accessed by users who are blind or visually impaired, with this report to be delivered to the president by the end of 2003; directs its information access committee to develop a set of priorities and positions concerning this issue, and to make such recommendations available to the manufacturers of the various E-book formats; directs this committee to communicate with those bodies currently engaged in developing standards for E-book platforms, to be certain that they incorporate into those standards means by which screen readers and braille displays can access E-books notwithstanding the need for protection schemes that safeguard the intellectual property incorporated into E-books; and directs the information access committee to report to the 2004 meeting of Library Users of America on the progress they have made by that time.**

**WHEREAS, the fastest-growing area of book publishing is represented by the production of e-books, which are protected software files that can only be played on specific, brand-name players, such as Microsoft Reader and Adobe E-book reader; and**

**WHEREAS, E-books have the potential of substantially increasing the information available to people who are blind or visually impaired; and**

**WHEREAS, none of the currently available commercial E-book readers is fully or even moderately accessible;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that this organization joins with its affiliate, Library Users of America in directing the president of the American Council of the Blind to prepare a document for ACB’s information access committee outlining the current problems of creating E-books that are fully accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the information access committee is hereby directed to prepare a report outlining the efforts that need to be taken to ensure that E-book technology can be fully and comfortably accessed by users who are blind or visually impaired, with this report to be delivered to the president by the end of 2003; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization directs its information access committee to develop a set of priorities and positions concerning this issue, and to make such recommendations available to the manufacturers of the various E-book formats; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this committee is directed to communicate with those bodies currently engaged in developing standards for E-book platforms, to be certain that they incorporate into those standards means by which screen readers and braille displays can access E-books, notwithstanding the need for protection schemes that safeguard the intellectual property incorporated into E-books; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the information access committee is hereby directed to report to the 2004 meeting of Library Users of America on the progress they have made by that time.**

**Adopted**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-29

**Opposes all efforts to delay purchase of accessible voting equipment because of unfounded and unsubstantiated security concerns about the integrity of ballots cast on DRE voting systems.**

**WHEREAS, the Help America Vote Act of 2002 requires state and local election officials to provide voting systems which are accessible to, and usable by, people who are blind and visually impaired, for use in federal elections; and**

**WHEREAS, this requirement can currently be met by direct recording electronic (DRE) voting systems; and**

**WHEREAS, virtually none of the certified DRE voting systems provide any means of producing a permanent record or hard copy of a voted ballot; and**

**WHEREAS, Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ) has introduced H.R. 2239, The Voter Confidence and Increased Accessibility Act of 2003, amending the Help America Vote Act of 2002, to require that all voting systems used in federal elections provide a voter verified permanent record or hard copy of each voted ballot; and**

**WHEREAS, this proposed legislation is being used by state and local governments as an excuse to delay the purchase of accessible voting systems; and**

**WHEREAS, these delays are occurring in spite of the fact that there is no indication that requiring a permanent record or hard copy of voted ballots is necessary for protecting the integrity of elections, and in fact, nationally recognized election experts assert that imposition of this requirement would dramatically increase the probability of election irregularities; and**

**WHEREAS, no evidence has ever been presented demonstrating that certified DRE voting systems are any more vulnerable, or susceptible to security violations, than optical scan voting systems; and**

**WHEREAS, there being no evidence of vulnerability, or susceptibility to security violations, there is no justification for requiring voting system manufacturers, or state and local governments, to provide paper copies of voted ballots;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization opposes H.R. 2239, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization directs its officers, directors and staff to work with its state and special-interest affiliates to oppose adoption of any state or federal legislation that would require delivery to the voter of a copy of his/her voted ballot, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization opposes all efforts to delay purchase of accessible voting equipment because of unfounded and unsubstantiated security concerns about the integrity of ballots cast on DRE voting systems.**

**Adopted.**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**

# AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

# RESOLUTION 2003-30

**Seeks the inclusion of provisions in highway funding legislation which would provide funds to transit agencies for installing detectable warnings at all transit station platforms.**

**WHEREAS, detectable warnings on platform edges at transit stations provide life-saving safety information to all transit riders, especially those who are blind or visually impaired; and**

**WHEREAS, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides that transit authorities must install detectable warnings in key stations only; and**

**WHEREAS, since the enactment of the ADA, research has shown the value of detectable warnings in preventing injury and death to transit riders; and**

**WHEREAS, the American Council of the Blind has long supported the use of detectable warnings on transit platforms; and**

**WHEREAS, the Congress of the United States is currently considering the reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act, which will provide funds for projects to enhance and improve the usability of transit systems;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled this 11th day of July, 2003, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that this organization seek inclusion of provisions in reauthorizing legislation for the Surface Transportation Act, which would make funds specifically available for the installation of detectable warnings on platform edges at all stations within a transit system, as well as provisions that would strongly encourage transit authorities to install detectable warnings on all transit station platforms.**

**Adopted**

**Donna Seliger, Secretary**