BE IT RESOLVED, That the Library of Congress continue to be arranged in two departments, a general library and a law library, and that any reorganization of the Library of Congress not change the status of the Law Library as a Department, or in fact or appearance alter the status, autonomy or function of the Law Library of the Library of Congress.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association encourages and supports the creation by an enactment of the United States Congress of a National Law Library as an independent, separate entity; that such National Law Library include the present Law Library of the Library of Congress; that the mission of the National Law Library be to serve Congress and the legal profession and to improve the nation's access to legal information.
The Law Library of Congress was established by the Congress as a separate department of the Library of Congress in 1832 and has been maintained as a separate department since that time.

In 1978-79 efforts were made to demote the Law Library of Congress from its status as a separate department to that of a subdivision of another department. A resolution identical to the first RESOLVED clause, above, was adopted by the House of Delegates at the 1979 Midyear Meeting. The efforts to demote the Law Library were defeated, with the American Bar Association playing a substantial role in pointing out the benefits to the nation of preserving the Law Library as a separate department.

Recently, efforts to demote the status of the Law Library have rekindled; one proposal surfaced to have the Law Library become a part of the social science collection.

Therefore, it is timely for the House of Delegates to reaffirm its 1979 policy by adopting the first resolution, above.

The second resolution would reaffirm a policy adopted by the House of Delegates at its 1981 Midyear Meeting, supporting the creation of a National Law Library comparable to the National Library of Medicine.

The concept of a "national law library" has existed since the Law Library of Congress was established as a separate department of the Library of Congress by the Act of July 14, 1831. Our forefathers recognized the need for a law library that would contain publications for recording and preserving the laws of this nation and other nations, and to provide ready access to these publications.

A National Law Library would be a center for the effective delivery of legal information to the nation. Included would be collections (legal literature), bibliographic control, networking and research services. It would serve the Congress, state legislatures, federal, state and local government agencies, federal, state and local courts, law schools, state and county law libraries, law firms, business organizations, associations and the public. Its potential can be measured by the remarkable accomplishments of the National Library of Medicine and its support of research and development in the field of medicine and public health.

The existing Law Library of the Library of Congress has the world's pre-eminent legal collection in both size and scope, and has a professional staff capable of administering it. The
advantages of the Law Library of the Library of Congress becoming the National Law Library are several. First, the initial investment would be minimized; the staggering cost of establishing a separate collection approaching that of the Law Library of the Library of Congress would be avoided. Second, there would be no additional space requirements, such as a separate building; the National Law Library would occupy the space of the present Law Library of Congress. Third, the National Law Library would continue to function in its priority support for the needs of Congress both directly and through its support of the Congressional Research Service. Fourth, to minimize costs, the National Law Library would continue to avail itself of the benefits of the copyright deposit law, the vast general collections of the Library of Congress and the technical resources of the Library of Congress.

Congress has not acted upon this matter, and the need for such a National Law Library is greater than ever.

In view of the foregoing, the Standing Committee on Facilities of the Law Library of Congress urges reaffirmation of the 1979 and 1981 policies by the House of Delegates.

Respectfully submitted,

February, 1992

Charles M. Mathias
Robert Pitofsky
Edwin M. Schroeder
Grace W. Taylor
Charlie Harvey Woods
Judith N. Wright
Sidney S. Sachs, Chair
GENERAL INFORMATION FORM
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No.______________
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Submitting Entity: Standing Committee on Facilities of the Law Library of Congress

Submitted By: Sidney S. Sachs, Chair

1. Summary of Recommendation(s).
   FIRST, That the Law Library of Congress remain a separate department of the Library of Congress.
   SECOND, That Congress establish a National Law Library, utilizing the existing Law Library of Congress.

2. Approval by Submitting Entity.
   Approved by unanimous vote at the Committee's November 1, 1991 meeting.

3. Previous submission to the House or relevant Association position.
   Identical resolutions adopted by the House at the 1979 (re FIRST) and 1981 (re SECOND) Midyear Meetings.

4. Need for Action at This Meeting.
   FIRST, Efforts again are underway to demote the status of the Law Library of Congress. Reaffirmation of its policy by the ABA therefore is needed.
   SECOND, Legal information needs are expanding rapidly; it is vital for the nation to have a National Law Library, comparable to the National Library of Medicine.

5. Status of Legislation. (If applicable.)
   None pending at this time.

6. Cost to the Association. (Both direct and indirect costs.)
   Minor costs re testifying before committees of the Congress.
7. Disclosure of Interest. (If applicable.)
   None.

8. Referrals.
   Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar,
   American Association of Law Libraries, and Association of
   American Law Schools.

9. Contact Person. (Prior to meeting.)
   Frederick R. Franklin, staff director of the Committee
   (312/988-5583).

10. Contact Person. (Who will present the report to the House.)
    Sherwin P. Simmons, Board liaison to the Committee
    (813/223-7474).