



December 20, 2007

Jane Light, Director
Martin Luther King, Jr. Library
150 E. San Fernando Street
San Jose, CA 95122

Dear Jane,

As President of the California Library Association, I write in support of the current San Jose Public Library Internet Access and Computer Use Policy. The California Library Association is the oldest and largest state association for libraries, library staff and library supporters in California.

The library's current Internet policy would be dramatically altered by the "proposed City Internet Access Policy" described in Pete Constant's October 18 memo. The proposal would require filters on all library computers for adult and children. While the proposal acknowledges the inherent problems with filtering technology, it suggests that is possible to create a setting that would block all child pornography and obscenity as well an additional filter for children that would block all sites harmful to minors. We believe that is not possible. Even those public libraries currently using filters do not make such broad assertions. The determination of what is criminal in nature is a very complex legal discussion that should be reserved for lawyers and judges. This filtering policy, if adopted, will result in both overfiltering and underfiltering. It will also create a false sense of security for the community.

The Public Library, by its very nature, must promote intellectual freedom and the right to information for all library users. Library policies should ensure broad access to information resources of all kinds. The California Library Association believes that the individual should have a right to determine what they view on the Internet. Further, we believe that parents and legal guardians are the best judge of their child's internet use.

Our belief in the right to access information in no way condones criminal activity. On the contrary, public libraries throughout the state have established policies and procedures that try to ensure that the library is a safe and welcoming place for all the community. We believe that there are many alternative methods to ensure the safety of children and urge you to support the current policy in place.

Sincerely,

Monique A. le Conge
2008 President, California Library Association

C: San Jose Public Library Commission
Jane Light, Director, San Jose Public Library