



Southern Maryland Regional Library Association, Inc.

Advancing Library Excellence

January 29, 2024

Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
Room 131
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Committee Members,

I am writing in opposition to **HB0025 – Public Schools – Sexually Explicit Materials – Prohibited in Libraries and Media Centers**. As a librarian deeply committed to fostering open access to diverse perspectives and knowledge, I believe that such restrictions pose significant challenges to intellectual freedom and the educational development of students.

Additionally, this bill undermines qualified school librarians' ability to acquire age appropriate materials for students. As part of the educational system, we should acknowledge and support the expertise of our school librarians in this area.

The overly broad language of the bill will have unintended consequences. No obscene materials are found in school libraries. Obscenity has been defined in law by the "Miller test," and materials that reference sexuality are not inherently obscene.

The proposed legislation fails to define "sexually explicit" and "age-appropriateness." This bill will have a disproportionate impact on library materials centering the LGBTQ+ community and will violate the civil rights of those students and their parents.

The Southern Maryland Regional Library Association, Inc. affirms and supports the role that school librarians, caregivers, and students play in developing well balanced collections that inspire learning.

The Southern Maryland Regional Library Association, Inc. opposes this bill and does not support its passage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ashley Teagle
CEO