

An open letter to the Maryland General Assembly
Support of The Freedom to Read Act of 2024 (HB 785 / SB738)

As a concerned citizen, life-long educator and learner, and avid supporter of intellectual freedom, I endorse the sentiments expressed in the Freedom to Read Act. Libraries are not merely buildings filled with books, but they are places that can help equalize the knowledge and information playing field and create educated, informed, and engaged citizens.

Librarians work hard to curate texts and other resources that provide access to diverse perspectives and open the world for many who have little other access. Twenty-first century learning necessitates access to texts across media, and libraries are places where *everyone* can access texts and the internet – for free.

The Freedom to Read Act of 2024 (HB 785 / SB738) is an important step towards safeguarding our democratic values and protecting the integrity of our libraries and library staff. By establishing clear guidelines for collection policies and strengthening protections against theft and damage, this legislation empowers libraries to fulfill their mission without fear of undue interference.

I urge the Maryland General Assembly to pass this vital legislation without delay. In doing so, they will not only uphold the principles of intellectual freedom but also ensure that Maryland's libraries remain vibrant hubs of learning and discovery for generations to come.

Respectfully submitted,

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