

February 19, 2024

This testimony is in support of HB0785, otherwise known as the "Freedom to Read Act." Though it's unfortunate that we live in a world where such legislation is necessary and where small and misguided sections of the population feel they should be able to censor what's available to all Marylanders, it's comforting to see this piece of legislation up for discussion. I'm a graduate student of library and information science, and even though I have a more vested interest in literacy and freedom of information than most, these critically important qualities which underlie a functional and informed society affect us all. Small acts of censorship pave the way for greater, terrible acts of disenfranchisement; an illiterate, uninformed population is easier to persecute. Thus, it's up to all Marylanders to call out acts of censorship for what they are and to support efforts to enshrine into law measures which promote literacy and information access while protecting the individuals that provide them. I am happy to join the vanguard of those in support of the Freedom to Read Act, and I encourage all those present today to support this bill.

Sincerely,

Hayden J. Kramer
MLIS Student
Prince George's County, MD