

My name is Claire Lemire. I am a student of social work at the Community College of Rhode Island and I am writing in support of House Bill no. 7386.

I have lived in Rhode Island since I was 3 years old, right down the street from a public library. When I tell others about our state, I am most proud to share how fantastic our libraries are.

I believe they are a cornerstone of our democracy and thriving communities. Libraries provide a wealth of knowledge from all perspectives. We must prevent them from being handcuffed by the divisive politics of a vocal minority who wish to shrink the public's access to the full range of literary works in order to impose their beliefs upon others.

There are many books in the library whose theses I disagree with personally, but I believe strongly in the right of every patron and their families to make their own decisions and read without barriers of cost or censorship. I urge you to commit to the support and protection of our public libraries for the good of every Rhode Islander and the future of free speech.