



RHODE ISLAND  
FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AND  
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AFT AFL-CIO

To: House State Government and Elections Committee  
From: James Parisi, Field Representative  
Date: February 29, 2024  
Re: **Freedom to Read Act**  
Testimony in **support** of 2024-H 7386 (Rep. Stewart et al.)

The Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals supports H 7386 and thanks Representative Stewart for its introduction. The RIFTHP represents school librarians in eleven public school districts who have a particular interest in this legislation. We also represent librarians at Rhode Island College and the University of Rhode Island.

H 7386 would enact state library policy to encourage librarians to have a wide variety of reading materials. The bill would restrict outside interference as librarians procure books and other materials to be made available to their consumers. The bill also declares that libraries “provide equitable access to information for all citizens”.

The legislation implicitly recognizes librarians as professionals entrusted to make decisions in public libraries without interference from external partisans when making decisions regarding the acquisition of reading content. For that reason, we support the legislation.

The RIFTHP urges passage of H 7386

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