



Apr 3rd, 2025  
In Favor of HB5726

My name is Cheyanne Pao. I am a Youth Leader at ARISE. I am a first generation Asian-American here in support of HB5726.

I do not only think, but I know the freedom to read is essential. Books are a way of portraying fictional and non-fictional stories. One thing all books of all genres have in common is cultivating the stories of individuals to share out.

As a first generation Asian American, and more specifically a Cambodian Asian American, I have heard horrible stories from my loved ones about our history, which are truly heartbreaking. One book that really connects to my history is the Diary of Anne Frank. During the Holocaust, she had faith. Although she was always hiding from the dreadful environment, she wrote in her diary. Her story is getting banned, which is infuriating. She lived in this terrifying situation where millions of her people died. Anne Frank's story was a big part of our history and is very impactful. Our stories need to be seen, not censored in today's society. Books are a way to keep us informed. Ignorance is a privilege. I can't fathom the fact that we would want to hide history. It helps you understand the past and learn from those mistakes. It helps us to stop the cycle of historical mistakes repeating themselves.

No matter what genre a book is. Whether it is science fiction or horror, it always teaches a reader something. There are millions of books and if anyone is going through a tough situation, there is a certain character in a certain book going through a similar situation. It serves as a reminder, if this character can get through this tough situation, so can I.

I ask that you continue to support HB5726 because books are powerful. They are meant to expand the creativity of our minds. Books are a way of coping, books help me learn about myself, and my history. Books give us new perspectives and build up our intelligence. Why ban that?

Cheyenne Pao  
9th Grade  
Dr. Jorge Alvarez Highschool