

Julianna Risica

Testimony in Favor of HB5726

To my elected officials:

My name is Julianna Risica, I am writing in support for the Freedom to Read Act HB5726.

As a lifelong Rhode Island resident, staff member at an Ocean State Library Consortium public library, and future librarian, I wholeheartedly oppose all efforts to restrict access to information and materials from Rhode Islanders regardless of the borrower's age or topic and support protections for Rhode Island librarians and content creators.

The freedom to read is the foundational core of an educated and informed democracy. Libraries across the United States have experienced a sharp rise in censorship efforts targeting materials written by and about LGBTQ+, black, indigenous, and other marginalized people. Diverse materials which reflect the experiences and lives of our neighbors across Rhode Island are valuable, important, and worth protecting.

To protect our state and our democracy, it is essential to support the freedom to read for all Rhode Islanders and further provide protections for writers, illustrators, booksellers, and librarians who are negatively impacted by those who oppose this right.

Please vote YES to the Freedom to Read Act HB5726.