
Michael C. Cerullo, LMHC
Counseling, Assessment and Psychotherapy Services

April 3, 2025

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley
Chair
RI House State Government and Education Committee

RE: House Bill H-5726 Rhode Island Freedom to Read Act

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Committee Members

I write in full support of H-5726.

I believe that it will in no way restrict our youth, in age-appropriate manners and contexts, from safely learning, broadening and deepening their perspectives of our history, culture and values. Indeed, it is their right under the protections our US and RI State Constitutions afford.

Additionally, as a therapist who has worked with hundreds of adolescents and their families, I am aware of the potential danger of trauma and the anti-social behaviors to which minors may be exposed, sometimes with life-long consequences.

I believe this bill will safely protect minors from any dangerous materials in any form. Indeed, given our youths' widespread and unsupervised exposure to the dangerous material all too frequently and easily found on web-based sources, this legislation will make our libraries an even safer place for them to exercise their minds and hearts as they grow toward adulthood and responsible citizenship.

For these reasons I urge you to pass this timely legislation to the House Floor for passage during this session.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my thoughts on H-5726.

Respectfully,



Michael C. Cerullo, LMHC
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