

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 329

Approved July 25, 2023

WHEREAS, Book bans are a slippery slope that can lead to censorship, marginalization of people, and the stifling of ideas, creativity and knowledge; and

WHEREAS, In recent times, book bans, laws and policies to limit books have become increasingly common in schools, libraries, and public places around the country; and

WHEREAS, According to the American Library Association, a record 2,571 unique titles were targeted for censorship with the vast majority written by or about people of color of the members of the LGBTQIA+ community; and

WHEREAS, President Biden announced he plans to appoint a new federal coordinator to address the increase of newly state laws enacted to book bans; and

WHEREAS, With books being banned, readers are left without access to literary works that may provide essential history, education or encourage thought-provoking conversations and new ideas; and

WHEREAS, This poses a real threat to the right of individuals to access information freely and without judgment; and

WHEREAS, As books often contain different perspectives, book banning prevents readers from developing an understanding of a topic and thinking for themselves; and

WHEREAS, Book bans narrow the range of books that people are exposed to, denying them an opportunity to explore the spectrum of ideas available within a certain subject area; and

WHEREAS, Book banning can also have a detrimental effect on societies; and

WHEREAS, What's more, banning books can lead to bias and prejudice, as society becomes more entrenched in its own viewpoints and less open to alternative idea; and

WHEREAS, We must actively seek out different perspectives and strive to embrace different ideas; and

WHEREAS, This way, readers can come to their own conclusions based on the evidence presented within a book, rather than just being told what is right or wrong; and

WHEREAS, We must also look to foster an environment of understanding and acceptance by not banning books that have been deemed controversial or inappropriate; and

WHEREAS, Book banning is a dangerous practice that has the ability to limit free expression, stifle creativity and knowledge, and prevent the development of healthy dialogue within society; and

WHEREAS, If we are to truly experience the freedom of knowledge, we must recognize the importance of protecting our right to access different ideas, so that we can explore them fully and come to our own conclusions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council hereby supports the prohibition of banning books.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council hereby supports that all public libraries in the City of Providence shall adopt the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights that indicates materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council supports the prohibition of the practice of banning books or other materials within all public schools, libraries or library systems in the City of Providence.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council shall eventually pass a law outlawing book bans and cut off local funding for any Providence public library that tries to ban books.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council urges the general assembly and Governor McKee to sign a state law protecting the freedom of public libraries to acquire books without external limitations and strip funding from any public library that threatens to ban books.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be sent to Providence Public Schools, the Rhode Island Department of Education, Providence Public Library and the Community Libraries of Providence.


IN CITY COUNCIL
JUL 20 2023

READ AND PASSED


RACHEL M. MILLER, PRESIDENT

CLERK

I HEREBY APPROVE.


Mayor

Date: 7/25/23