



2557 STATE ROUTE 21  
CANANDAIGUA, NY 14424

(585) 394-8260  
FAX: (585) 394-1935

[WWW.OWWL.ORG](http://WWW.OWWL.ORG)

July 7, 2022

**TO:** Assemblyman Jeff Gallahan  
**SUBJECT:** Book Challenges in Libraries

Dear Assemblyman Gallahan,

Across our nation, the trend of book banning is increasing at an alarming rate. As a result, the libraries in your district have concerns regarding the impact this phenomenon will have on the library's work to foster inclusiveness, understanding, and belonging in our communities.

As librarians, we are no strangers to the challenges inspired by varying viewpoints. As a matter of fact, we expect opposition as individuals discover ideas that contest their beliefs. Offering varied perspectives on current and historical issues is a core tenet of librarianship. Unfortunately, the hostility and polarized nature of today's attacks on library materials go far beyond reasonable. Clusters of people now aim to censor information in order to force a singular viewpoint.

Libraries do not seek to further agendas, propagate controversy, or distribute "harmful" information. In principle, libraries seek to reinforce Intellectual Freedom in the purest sense by allowing a community to read whatever they wish to read. We support endless learning and education because when people learn about one another, read about different cultures, and open their minds to acknowledge different beliefs, it makes for a much more compassionate world to live in.

We respect that not all materials will appeal to every community member. However, what we do not respect, nor will we stand for, is a conquest to censor materials from an entire community because of disagreement.

My intention in this letter is to better express the mission of libraries to further differing viewpoints. I ask that you speak in support of our profession's charge to provide materials and condemn book banning whenever possible. Book banning is not an instrument to preserve the current world—it is a blight that will stifle our future.

Libraries believe that everyone should have the freedom to read what they choose to; I hope this is what you believe too.

Sincerely,

Ronald Kirsop, Executive Director  
OWWL Library System