



LEADING THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALL
MICHIGAN LIBRARIES THROUGH ADVOCACY,
EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

August 28, 2023

Dear Senator,

The Michigan Library Association (MLA) has launched a six-month MI Right to Read campaign to encourage Michiganders to oppose censorship and book-banning efforts and protect their First Amendment right to read whatever they choose to read at public libraries.

Book-banning and censorship efforts have been on the rise in libraries around the country. Our public libraries are being targeted at an alarming rate by individuals influenced by groups who are attempting to censor different perspectives by removing books that discuss topics such as racism, sexuality, gender, and history.

However, the majority of Michiganders support the work our public libraries do and want to see various perspectives portrayed in the content available at their local libraries.

In a statewide poll commissioned by MLA, 75% of respondents said we need to protect access to books, especially for young people learning about different perspectives, and **83% of all respondents would support state legislation that would protect the right of the public to read what they wish to read in local public libraries and not have books banned.**

“Every family in Michigan has a different background, and our youth deserve to see themselves reflected in books available at their local public library,” said Michigan Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist II. “Reading unlocks creativity, courage and imagination. Having diverse content available at our public libraries is crucial in making Michigan a better place for our kids to learn and grow.”

Michigan’s public libraries are centers for community, and we need to ensure that librarians across Michigan can do their jobs and serve the information needs of all individuals. Parents should know that librarians want to partner with them during their family visits to the library to help guide children to age-appropriate content. Learn more about the MI Right to Read campaign and coalition at www.MIRightToRead.com/parents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Deborah E. Mikula'.

Deborah E. Mikula, Executive Director