

Senate Education

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SB25-063 Library Resource Decision Standards for Public Sch

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Paula Gruentzel For themselves	I SUPPORT this bill. The public must be allowed access to reading content by authors from all walks of life. Censorship is un-American.
Kristen Molsness For themselves	<p>Dear Committee Members,</p> <p>I am writing as a concerned parent and advocate for Colorado’s students, educators, and libraries to urge your support for Senate Bill 25-063, “Concerning standards that public schools are required to include in policies regarding library resources.” This legislation is essential in ensuring that school policies do not unfairly restrict access to diverse books or silence historically underrepresented voices. I am a firm believer in the value of reading, and reading about people that look or sound like you, or have similar beliefs that you do creates a sense of belonging. Reading allows for perspective and understanding. Reading has always been a big part of my life, and censoring books should never be allowed.</p> <p>SB 63, would bar school districts from enacting policies that discriminate against literature from protected classes such as LGBTQ+, Black/POC voices, people of faith, and others. Every student deserves the opportunity to see themselves reflected in the materials available in their school libraries, and every educator deserves the freedom to provide students with books that encourage learning and critical thinking.</p> <p>Censorship has no place in Colorado’s schools. Our state has always upheld the values of intellectual freedom, and passing SB 63 would reinforce our commitment to the rights of students to access a broad and inclusive range of literature.</p> <p>Please support SB 63 – our freedom to read deserves to be protected.</p> <p>Thanks for your consideration.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>

	Kristen Molsness
<p>Catherine Boddie For themselves</p>	<p>I am submitting my written testimony in support of SB 25-063. As a public librarian who has worked in collaboration through outreach with numerous schools at the middle and high school levels throughout my career, I have had the opportunity to see firsthand the vitally important role our public school libraries play. They have a unique opportunity to empower students in their learning, spark a love of reading, and help break down barriers in access to resources vital to their education. I have also seen the harm that can be done when our public school libraries and staff lack vital policies to allow them to utilize their expertise in developing a collection that will support the learning and development of their students and to meaningfully address reconsideration requests when they arise. SB 25-063 will provide critical foundational policies for the protection of our public school libraries and staff, as well as supporting critical access to materials for our students to support not only their education but also foster a lifelong love of reading.</p>
<p>Cristy Moran For themselves</p>	<p>Books and stories function as windows into the world beyond the things we can see in our limited field of vision. Books tell us about the world we inhabit and the worlds we can create. Stories teach us lessons about who we are and have been and give us the language to dream of who we can be. If it is true that children are our future, then it is our responsibility to ensure that we give them the tools to build that future with the knowledge of the past and the shared experience of our neighbors near and far.</p> <p>In our classrooms we use textbooks and lesson plans. We design curriculum and create activities that educate as well as inspire. We foster innovation from our most fertile, creative, and eager minds. Those are our springboards, and in our libraries we provide the pools of fiction and nonfiction, reference texts and literature, and instruction manuals and art books that our kids can explore to discover the world and themselves.</p> <p>SB25-063 presents the opportunity for Colorado to protect the integrity of education for those who are among the most vulnerable and voiceless in the halls of power: our kids. Our school libraries are a most targeted and vicious attack by people who want to tell your kids and our kids what they can learn, what they can think, who they are, and who they can be. School libraries are where dedicated, educated, and professional staff make critical selections to support what's happening in the classroom and materials that can enrich their lives beyond it. Our school libraries are us. They're the people who live here - in Colorado, in our neighborhoods, in our communities - and who love us. They're the people who consistently pivot when technology advances. They're the people who curate the spaces that meet the needs of our learners: the co-learning spaces where kids can meet to work on projects together or learn from their peers and places to sit quietly in reading or reflection. School library staff, librarians, and media specialists find technology and give students a space to discover it and use it.</p>

	<p>At a time when education is seeing unprecedented increase in turnover of dedicated, seasoned, and exceptional teachers and staff - from 14% in 2021-22 to 17% in 2022-23 - it is crucial that we extend protections to our school library staff and librarians to ensure that they feel confident in supporting the learning and enrichment of the students in their libraries. School library staff and volunteers must be protected from retaliation, doxxing, and firing simply for doing their job in responding to the needs of our students as those needs change.</p> <p>The abilities to ask questions, find answers, change our minds, and move in new, exciting directions are foundational principles of the United States and defining characteristics of Colorado. The freedom to be curious is what SB25-063 will protect. The freedom to be independent thinkers is what SB25-063 can foster. We do this through our school libraries, and we need our legislature to respond to that clarion call to do the most Colorado thing: protect our independence from the time we're in school to the time we make the rules.</p>
<p>Kirk Loadman-Copeland For himself</p>	<p>As a retired Protestant minister and a student of American history, I believe SB25-063 is vital, as written, in protecting freedom of religion and speech. While some misconstrue history, America was not founded as a Christian nation. It was founded as a Republic with protected freedoms, including the separation of church and state. The Bill of Rights establishes no religion and prohibits none. But true freedom of religion is only possible if we also have freedom from religion. This is why freedom of speech is sacred—it transcends religion.</p> <p>Books embody free speech. While there are limits to free expression—we cannot, for example, falsely yell “fire” in a crowded theater—banning books from public school libraries is akin to that very act, inciting unnecessary fear and control.</p> <p>Books may be removed for practical reasons, such as space or maintenance, but this should follow a transparent, thoughtful policy that considers multiple perspectives, including those of the author and potential readers. Without such a process, narrow interests may dominate.</p> <p>The children who attend public schools and their parents are diverse in many ways. SB25-063 honors and protects that diversity by ensuring that public school libraries are responsive to that diversity.</p>
<p>Roxanne Aviles For himself</p>	<p>Members of the Committee,</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Roxanne Aviles and I am here today representing myself as a parent and also a proud public school educator. I am here to express my strong support for Senate Bill 25-063, which mandates that local school boards and the State Charter School Institute Board adopt comprehensive, written policies governing the acquisition, retention, display, and use</p>

	<p>of library resources, as well as the utilization of public school library facilities. This bill further establishes clear procedures for the reconsideration of library materials, ensuring that any challenges to those materials are handled in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner.</p> <p>In our community of Elizabeth, Colorado, our public schools and their libraries are more than just repositories of books. They serve as critical centers for learning, exploration, and community engagement. Local educators and parents alike have noted an increasing reliance on our school libraries to provide diverse perspectives that empower our students with the skills of critical thinking and open inquiry. In recent local discussions, community members have emphasized the need for policies that safeguard the intellectual freedom our children deserve while ensuring that decisions about library content are made impartially and transparently.</p> <p>The necessity of SB 25-063 is underscored by recent developments on the national stage, including the ACLU lawsuit against Crookshank’s. This case has shone a harsh light on the dangers of vague or inconsistently applied policies in library settings. In that lawsuit, the ACLU argued that the lack of clear, standardized procedures led to decisions that, at times, appeared arbitrary and, in some instances, risked suppressing access to a full range of ideas and viewpoints. The controversy serves as a timely reminder that without precise guidelines, the very foundations of our First Amendment rights can be undermined; rights that guarantee the freedom to read and learn without undue censorship.</p> <p>By enacting SB 25-063, Colorado would take a decisive step toward preventing the kind of situation highlighted by the Crookshank’s case. This legislation ensures that any decision to remove or reconsider library materials is subject to a rigorous process that respects both the rights of our students and the professional integrity of our educators and librarians. It also provides necessary protections for library staff, shielding them from retaliation when they adhere to these established policies.</p> <p>I believe that SB 25-063 strikes the right balance: it protects intellectual freedom and the educational integrity of our public schools while also addressing community concerns about content challenges. In Elizabeth and throughout Colorado, this bill is a crucial investment in the future of our students; a commitment to an educational environment where diverse ideas flourish under a framework of clear, fair, and accountable policy.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and your thoughtful consideration of this important measure.</p>
Kelly Detzel Hess For themselves	Hello,

	<p>I am writing to express my strong support for SB 25-063. This crucial legislation would provide vital protections for school educators and librarians regarding the acquisition, retention, display, and use of library resources. If passed, this bill will extend similar protections that public librarians already enjoy to those working in school settings.</p> <p>I strongly believe that this bill is essential for ensuring that our educators and librarians can continue to provide students with access to diverse, age-appropriate educational materials without fear of retaliation or censorship. In a time when freedom of education and free speech are increasingly under threat, this bill is a powerful step forward in ensuring that our schools remain spaces where all students can explore, learn, and engage with a wide range of ideas.</p> <p>For me, crucial issues in SB 25-063 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Protecting Educators and Librarians: SB 63 explicitly prohibits any retaliation against teachers, librarians, or school staff for providing students with educational resources that are age-appropriate and developmentally sound. * Defending Against Ideological Censorship: This bill prevents school districts from banning books simply due to political or ideological disagreements with the material's views. * Upholding First Amendment Rights: By reinforcing the constitutional right to access diverse ideas and information, SB 63 enshrines protections in Colorado law, safeguarding against both current and future censorship threats. <p>Thank you for your attention and continued advocacy for freedom in education.</p> <p>Sincerely, Kelly Detzel Hess Mother of two public school students</p>
<p>John Lane For Global Arts Press</p>	<p>My parents were strict about what I was allowed to do as a child. But books were held in the highest esteem. Learning and knowledge were sacred pursuits, and a library was a sacred place. Those were – and are – my family values.</p> <p>One of my favorite childhood memories was coming home from the library with a stack of books I picked out myself. It wasn't till many years later that I realized those books weren't just a pleasant way to pass the time. I was exercising my brain, making</p>

	<p>it bigger and better. As a result of the love I developed for reading and writing, I've been rewarded with a career that has taken me around the world.</p> <p>What never occurred to my politically conservative family was the idea that some stranger would try to decide what knowledge I had access to, or what I could or couldn't read. It would have been considered child abuse – the equivalent of locking a minor in an intellectual closet, and starving their mind.</p> <p>And yet that's what certain people have recently decided they have a right to do. Which isn't just an abuse of someone else's children and teens – it's also an assault on other parents' rights to raise their own children and teens. Conveniently, this imaginary right they cooked up seems to apply only to them. But "Live and let live" is not a one-way street.</p> <p>Their point of view does not hold water. How did these strangers even know which books should be banned until they read them? You obviously can't ban a book you haven't read. But if those books were so harmful, didn't they morally corrupt the book banner? If they did, then by their own standards, we are not obliged to respect anything they say. And if those books didn't morally corrupt the book banner, their whole argument falls apart.</p> <p>At that point, all they have left is this indefensible position that what's good for the goose should be banned for the gander. I trust that we are not here to enable double standards, but to eliminate them.</p> <p>We should not have to take such deliberate steps to protect our sources of knowledge and learning, or to loudly proclaim our support for libraries and librarians – but obviously, we do. There can be no compromise with those who insist that ignorance is a virtue. It is not.</p> <p>Senate Bill 25-63 should be advanced from committee, passed without objection, and signed into law, where it can then serve as model legislation for the other 49 states.</p>
<p>Lucy Hoffhines For themselves</p>	<p>I am a former elementary school educator, now retired.</p> <p>I absolutely support SB 25 - 063. Such an important move for our schools !</p> <p>Thank you!</p>

	Lucy Hoffhines
<p>Lauren Kerstein For themselves</p>	<p>Dear Concerned Leaders,</p> <p>I wrote this morning, but I am unsure if the message went through. Technology...</p> <p>I am writing again, just in case.</p> <p>Thank you SO much for taking the time to consider how important it is to protect teachers and librarians, AND ensure children have the opportunity to see themselves reflected in books. I encourage all of you to take a moment to think about the books that were meaningful to you as a child. My guess is that you found something within the pages that meant something to you--personally! That is so powerful. Imagine if you didn't have access to that book.</p> <p>Books change lives for the better.</p> <p>I always tell children that they have the power to dream big dreams and make them come true. When we limit the books they can read, we take away their power and we squash their dreams.</p> <p>Our librarians and teachers are working hard to support children as they find their way in the world. It is essential we give teachers and librarians the latitude they need to do their jobs effectively.</p> <p>Please vote YES on SB 25-063.</p> <p>Best, Lauren H. Kerstein, Local Author</p>
<p>Rob Rogers For themselves</p>	<p>I'm writing to express my strong support for SB25-063, a crucial measure that ensures local school boards and the Charter School Institute establish clear, written policies on the acquisition, retention, and use of library resources in public schools. I urge you to consider the far-reaching consequences if this bill is not passed.</p> <p>Without SB25-063, our schools will be left without consistent standards for managing library resources, making them vulnerable to politically motivated censorship and arbitrary book bans. We've seen coordinated efforts across the country—and increasingly here in Colorado—to remove books that represent diverse perspectives, particularly those addressing race, gender identity, and historical injustices. Without</p>

	<p>clear policies in place, these efforts can quietly succeed, limiting students’ access to the broad, inclusive education they deserve.</p> <p>Failing to pass this bill leaves local control exposed to outside political pressures, allowing external forces to dictate what students can read and learn. This risks creating an uneven educational landscape where students in one district have access to comprehensive resources, while those in neighboring districts are denied materials that foster critical thinking and reflect their lived experiences.</p> <p>Moreover, not enacting SB25-063 sends the wrong message—that intellectual freedom is negotiable in Colorado’s public schools. Libraries are more than places to borrow books; they are spaces that cultivate curiosity, empathy, and a lifelong love of learning. Without clear guidelines, we risk allowing fear and misinformation to shape our educational environment instead of thoughtful, evidence-based decision-making.</p> <p>Passing SB25-063 is essential to safeguarding the integrity of our public schools and ensuring that every student, regardless of where they live, has access to diverse, high-quality library resources. I urge you to support this bill and stand up for educational freedom and equity in Colorado.</p>
<p>Jeany Rush Against themselves</p>	<p>TO: Senate Committee for Education</p> <p>RE: SB25-063 Concerning Standards that public schools are required to include in Policies Regarding Library Resources 2-10-25</p> <p>FROM: Jeany Rush, Concerned Constituent, Colorado Springs</p> <p>VOTE: NO</p> <p>Indecency – RAPE of our Children- By Mental, Physical Means- Sexually Explicit Materials of all mediums, as well RAPE OF OUR CULTURE, OF OUR CHILDREN’S MINDS, OF OUR VERY EXISTENCE AS HUMANS, HAS BEEN CONDUCTED IN PLAIN SIGHT FOR DECADES, BUT HAS SURFACED IN GREATER WAYS DAILY IN OUR NATION, AS WELL AS IN OUR WORLD.</p> <p>WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT THIS? And as evidenced in the last 4 and more years, exhibited in all of our school libraries, as well as public libraries.</p> <p>On Thursday, March 7, 2024, some on the Academy School District Board of Education decided This Book is Gay (one that instructs kids in foreplay, masturbation, and contacting neighborhood pedophiles without their parents’ knowledge) was appropriate because board members wanted to protect First Amendment rights. This book also tells kids to eat each other's scat! Seriously! This school board in Colorado and others in the US, voted to keep this book.</p> <p>"DO you want to take the first bite?"</p> <p>But, considering both Roth v. United States, 354 U. S. 476 and Miller v. California, 41 U.S. 15 explicitly determined that obscene material was not entitled to protections</p>

	<p>under the First Amendment...whose rights were these board members protecting? The kids'.... or sexual predators'?</p> <p>While the first book was available to high schoolers, this next one, This One Summer, is a graphic novel found in several ASD20 middle school libraries – and can't go but several pages without telling children about oral sex and ejaculation, among other extreme topics.</p> <p>Whether it is with mental or physical mutilation, our children are the PREY! Through our federal laws such as Title 9, amendment, state laws enacted even in this year to strip parental rights for protecting their own children at age 12, or younger behind the scenes, we are being violated; and they are being violated. American School Counselors Assoc. and all other parts of the Dept. of Education, have totally usurped our rights as parents, giving our children to the STATE, communist style. This is same state constantly employing Marxist take-over tactics to control more and more of our lives, both personal, and public. This totally includes the American Library Association, which endorses too many "PORN" grade books for use by schools, and to our minors, OUR CHILDREN! More than 1400 books, and most likely more were approved by the ALA and would not pass a smell test for many decent parents.</p> <p>Roots of these sick agenda go back to even before WW2 and the Frankfurt School, in Germany pushing its sick works. Today even in all our schools, counselors can council your children, convince them they need to change their genders, and built sick and emotional lies with the use of SEL CRT DEI and other means. This sickness transfers into the books, videos, computer programs to capture the minds of the young, and to normalize what can only be characterized as RAPE of young children.</p> <p>We as a society would not tolerate this in the workplace, but we tolerate it in the Minds of our Children. These crimes against Humanity are woven into the UN, the WHO, and the World Economic Forum Agenda AND into our own "ONCE TRUSTED SPACES OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES" !</p> <p>For the last two years we have gone to school board meetings, library districts, commissioners, city council, and more, and to other meetings to SOUND THE ALARMS OF BILLIONS OF \$ and tons of curricula offensive to our kids. No one stopped these programs.</p> <p>Your bill does not set up safety as per the above institutions who are too busy trying to claim rights for LGBTQ etc. Well no one said discriminate against children gay or straight. YOU discriminate every time you put one "group" over another. You sell PORN by default because you do not create what I know is needed. A SAFETY WALL AKA FIREWALL THAT schools would not allow children to go to portals to the public libraries, where these materials are allowed. But in our public schools, it should not be allowed anyway. But worse, your criteria, and this bill leaves way too much MUDDY as to who determines what is allowed, etc. Parents should have the ultimate say as to what they want to expose their kids to in materials, but not in public schools. And schools should not be the creators of "future porn stars." I am not saying remove books from public libraries, I am saying you in your bill you do not protect children from obviously sick sources of "sex education." None of you are qualified to determine what parents should and should allow for their children. Actually schools have no business pushing so much PORN like material to minors. In my day you would be in jail. Please look at your bill, and dump it. Stop poisoning our</p>
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	<p>children, and I know a day will come when all of this activity will be able to be legally prosecuted. Thank you for reading my long discussion. Further, I am attempting to awaken all of us to what are the red lines, and boundaries which have been crossed in our education system. Academics, Not Porn! And I am not saying some scientific biological education should not be taught, but not to the degree, where anywhere else a person would be arrested as a pedophile.</p>
<p>Ana Greer For themselves</p>	<p>I am writing to testify my approval for SB25-063. My name is Ana Greer and I am a 21 year old recent college graduate. I have always been a huge supporter of public school libraries because of their undeniably significant role in my education. My school library throughout elementary and high school served as a welcoming community and safe place for me to explore subjects I would not be able to read elsewhere. I remember in middle school I was introduced to a book club where I read a novel about living in East Berlin after World War II. Reading this book taught me about a dark side of history that changed my perception there onwards. It motivated me to learn more about German history and how to not make similar mistakes in the future, eventually leading me to even visit Berlin. This book was quite harsh and gruesome but it was necessary for me to read. I would be devastated if I was not exposed to the experiences and ideas in this book. It caused me to become more empathetic towards marginalized individuals due to the characters in the book (such as certain LGBTQ individuals). It genuinely scares me to think that children might not be allowed to read these books in the future. Books help teach you to independently make decisions about the world around you, and schools are necessary for providing this resource. It would make me so sad to think someone could not read my favorite book from middle school. Thank you for your time.</p>