



## Nebraska School Librarians Association

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Dear members of the Nebraska Legislature Judiciary Committee,

The Nebraska School Librarians Association is opposed to LB 441 and would like you to be aware of the following:

School and public librarians are trained experts in collection development in service to minors. To criminalize and make librarians vulnerable to prosecution is a concerning prospect in protecting our young citizens' rights to information. As champions of intellectual freedom, the library community is concerned when a small group of vocal parents could disrupt access to vital information for all patrons. We ask that our state leaders trust the professional expertise of librarians and local boards to collaborate with parents and guardians to support all students in our communities.

The Nebraska School Librarians Association would like to call attention to potential outcomes of the proposed legislation:

- Cost for school districts to carry liability insurance for all educators and school librarians would require additional funding and would be of similar cost to that of insurance carried by police officers.
- Cost for school districts for legal fees related to any prosecution in which the school district is also named as a defendant could be burdensome and would require additional funding.
- Students may lose access to materials that would prepare them to make informed decisions as members of our Nebraska communities.
- The teacher and school librarian shortage would increase as current employees may choose to leave education and potential future teachers may choose to pursue other careers rather than face potential litigation.
- Families may choose to leave our communities or our state if they feel their children's constitutional rights to information are being violated through state-sanctioned censorship.

The United States Supreme Court has made landmark decisions regarding what constitutes obscenity regarding materials available to minors. These decisions have also been used to establish national guidelines for material selection in school libraries and to create locally-approved library material policies. Pursuant to the guidelines of the Supreme Court and the Bill of Rights, the intellectual freedom of minors in Nebraska should be upheld.

Respectfully,

The Nebraska School Librarians Association Executive Board