

## **Lisa Cataldi**

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**From:** House State Government and Elections Committee  
**Sent:** Monday, April 21, 2025 9:33 AM  
**To:** Lisa Cataldi  
**Subject:** FW: School Library Act: H5488

**From:** Stephanie Mills <stephaniemills81@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 20, 2025 6:28 PM  
**To:** House State Government and Elections Committee <HouseStateGovernment@rilegislature.onmicrosoft.com>  
**Subject:** School Library Act: H5488

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to you today as both a public school educator and parent to express my strong support for House Bill H5488, which would mandate a school library as well as a certified school librarian in every public school within our state. This legislation specifically outlines the elements of a school library such as a dedicated space, budget, new technology and access to a large collection of books. In an era where being savvy regarding the news and media we consume is paramount, this bill helps ensure a certified school librarian is there- helping to hone our student's 21st century skills. The bill's insistence on a permanent and dedicated space also ensures our students have access to a room where teaching, learning and reading for pleasure can happen.

Furthermore, H5488 specifically mentions the need for an adequate and diverse collection funded by a dedicated budget as well as necessary technology which is vital for creating effective library programs. These components will ensure that every student has access to resources that help students learn to love reading, support academic success, and cultivate essential information literacy skills. Moreover, this bill rightly emphasizes the necessity of a certified school librarian in each public school. Without a certified school librarian, it is just a room full of books and computers.

Passing H5488 is about equipping our children with the tools and support they need to thrive in the world we live in. I know in times of budget cuts and monetary woes, it is easy to see the library as a "nice to have" but research indicates that libraries are a "need to have." Keith Curry Lance's groundbreaking study showed that students in schools with well-supported libraries and librarians tend to score significantly higher on standardized tests in reading, writing, and other subjects compared to students in schools without them. This bill will help us move our students forward and can change the educational landscape in Rhode Island to be a model for the country.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Mills

Cranston, RI