

## Steven Sepe

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**From:** rwalleymail@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 2, 2025 9:45 PM  
**To:** House State Government and Elections Committee  
**Cc:** Jeanette Bradley  
**Subject:** H5726 Testimony

I write in strong support of the Freedom to Read Act, H5726.

For forty years, I have been a professional creator of literature for young children. I have won awards and have been included on best-seller lists. I have spoken about childrens literature to audiences of all ages in venues ranging from classrooms, to libraries, to museums.

In all of these adventures, I am consistently amazed by the commitment of the teaching and library professionals as they introduce young children to books. They understand that books have a unique place in a child's early world. Whether it's shared reading with a caregiver, or reading on their own, experiencing a book is a unique interactive experience. Favorite story-time books often remain favorite books for life. Thus, readers are born. And we want readers, right?

But, teaching and library professionals know that they can never know which book will captivate a particular child. I know well that the books I make will not be the favorite of every child. That's okay and as it should be. Just as every child is not the same, every book should not be the same.

Teaching and library professionals ought to be free to stock their shelves with a broad range of books that reflect the broad interests of ALL the children in their community.

Please support Rhode Island's founding principles and pass this legislation allowing teaching and library professionals to give the children of our state the gift of free access to ideas without fear of radical and debilitating censorship limiting their choices.

Robert Alley

R W Alley, from my iPhone