

Good afternoon, Chairperson and members of the committee,

I am writing to you as a Rhode Island educator, who has worked 28+ years in public and private education. Not one school where I have worked in (and there are many) was missing a library!! It is an absolutely MUST that all levels of education have libraries and a qualified librarian!!!

I am writing to you today, to support the very important **School Libraries Act (SB-2078)**.

Books matter! Education matters!! Support in libraries matter!!

I am writing to you because the idea of not have a library and its resources in our schools would devastate our schools, students and our learning: therefore our futures!

Are you really saying to our youth:

You don't matter!

Your learning doesn't matter!

Your futures don't matter!

Your education doesn't matter!

Books don't matter!

Research doesn't matter!

A quiet place to study/learn/hang out doesn't matter!

Expanding our horizons doesn't matter!

Looking for career opportunities doesn't matter!

Joining a book club doesn't matter!

Asking a knowledgeable librarian for help doesn't matter!

Are you planning on replacing books and librarians and quiet spaces with questionable information from...AI???? AI can be incorrect! We don't need more tech and isolationist tools.

How would you feel if YOU went to a school with no library?

Guaranteed that you all experienced encyclopedias, reading and writing reports about animals, reading an inspirational biography in a soft corner chair, and learning the Dewey decimal system. Why are YOU not ensuring future kids the same? Do you think kids WANT to get rid of libraries?

Who are the people going to make decisions about our senior years? Today's students. Don't you want them to be educated, knowledgeable and thoughtful? Think of what our senior citizen years will be like with no libraries? No resources? No book clubs? Because the message you are sending the younger generations is: those things don't matter.

Thank you so much for reading this letter. I truly appreciate your consideration.

Renee Martinez

Roger Williams Ave Rumford RI 02916