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rilibraries.org

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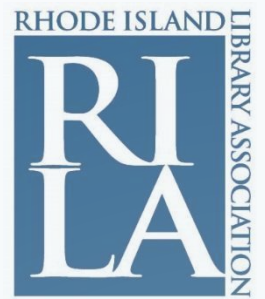
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To: Senator Hanna M. Gallo, Chair
RI Senate Education Committee

From: Esther Wolk, SLRI President

Supporting bill 2026 -- S 2525

Date: 3/4/2026



Dear Senator Hanna M. Gallo and members of the RI Senate Education Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the School Librarians of Rhode Island (SLRI) In support of bill 2026 -- S 2525, Library eBook Contracts. As school librarians we are tasked with providing access to library materials for the students and staff in our school communities. As material costs have risen and library budgets have decreased, it has become increasingly more difficult to provide access to the materials that our school communities need.

When a school librarian purchases print materials (books, magazines) the library owns them forever. However, when a school library purchases digital materials (e-Books, audiobooks) they come with a limited contract that often states how long we have usage of the materials and how many people can use the materials at once. e-Books and audiobooks are significantly more costly for libraries to purchase than the print version of the same book.

Digital materials are very important for our school community. They are popular with students, especially students with special needs. e-Books allow students with visual impairments to make the text size bigger and easier to see than print books. Audiobooks allow students with visual impairments and reading disabilities access to the same books as their classmates are reading in print.

Because of the cost of digital materials most RI school libraries access them through our membership in RILINK (Rhode Island Library Information Network for Kids). This collection from SORA gives our students access to e-Books and audiobooks, but almost all of the titles only allow one student to borrow each title at a time. If a title is one that is popular with students or is part of a curriculum, it may take weeks or months for students to gain access.

Please vote in favor of bill 2026 -- S 2525, Library eBook Contracts so RI's school communities continue to have access to books in digital formats for our students who want and need them.

Sincerely,

Esther Wolk, MLIS, MEd
SLRI President