



## Perspectives on Book Banning Panel Resource Guide

*Various Links and Topics Discussed\**

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(\*Note: The following are not meant as an endorsement of their site or the organization. This is not exhaustive. Many great organizations do good work. There are many great resources available; these are only a few. Please continue to use resources and information sites that you are comfortable with using.)

### HOW TO JOIN/DONATE:

- FREEDOM TO READ FOUNDATION: [JOIN](#) and/or [DONATE](#)
- UNITE AGAINST BOOK BANS: [JOIN THE FIGHT HERE](#)
- PEN AMERICA: [JOIN](#) and/or [DONATE](#)
- THE MERRITT FUND: ([About](#)), [DONATE](#)
- NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST CENSORSHIP: ([About](#)), [JOIN](#) and/or [DONATE](#)
- COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND: ([About](#)), [JOIN](#) and/or [DONATE](#)
- ACLU: ([About](#)), [JOIN](#) and/or [DONATE](#)
- FIRE: ([About](#)), [JOIN](#) and/or [DONATE](#)
- RED, WINE & BLUE: ([About](#)), [JOIN](#) and/or [DONATE](#)

*all of these groups have resources and toolkits*

### REPORT CHALLENGED OR BANNED BOOK(S), AUTHOR(S), TRANSLATOR(S), PROGRAMMING, INTERNET-RELATED CHALLENGES

- OFFICE OF INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM: [REPORT](#)
- PEN AMERICA: [REPORT](#)
- COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND: [REPORT](#)
- NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST CENSORSHIP: [REPORT](#)

### FIRST AMENDMENT

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution was passed by Congress on September 25, 1789. Ratified December 15, 1791.

### FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT

“All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

### UNITE AGAINST BOOK BANS ([LINK](#))

Unite Against Book Bans is a national initiative to empower readers everywhere to stand together in the fight against censorship. You can find additional resources to amplify and support the Unite Against Book Bans campaign in the [UABB Toolkit PDF](#).

### OFFICE FOR INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

Established December 1, 1967, the Office for Intellectual Freedom is charged with implementing ALA policies concerning the concept of intellectual freedom as embodied in the [Library Bill of Rights](#), the Association’s basic policy on free access to libraries and library materials. The goal of the office is to educate librarians and the general public about the nature and importance of intellectual freedom in libraries.

## THE FREEDOM TO READ FOUNDATION (@OIF)

The Freedom to Read Foundation (FTRF) is a non-profit legal and educational organization affiliated with the [American Library Association](#). [FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT](#). FTRF protects and defends the First Amendment to the Constitution and supports the right of libraries to collect—and individuals to access—information. The Freedom to Read Foundation was established to promote and defend this right; to foster libraries as institutions wherein every individual's First Amendment freedoms are fulfilled, and to support the right of libraries to include in their collections and make available any work that they may legally acquire. The [First Amendment](#) to the United States Constitution guarantees all individuals the right to express their ideas without governmental interference and to read and listen to the ideas of others.

Founded in 1969, the Freedom to Read Foundation is the American Library Association's response to its members' interest in having adequate means to support and defend librarians whose positions are jeopardized because of their resistance to abridgments of the First Amendment; and to set a legal precedent for the freedom to read on behalf of all the people.

## LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people in the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting the abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
6. Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
7. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information

### Right to Read Act:

Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and Representative Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ-03) introduced [this proposed new legislation designed](#) to ensure all students, including low-income and minority students, children with disabilities, and English language learners, have access to an effective school library staffed by a certified school librarian. The Right to Read Act would increase student access to fully staffed and appropriately resourced school libraries and authorize funding to meet these urgent needs. The bill goes further to strengthen effective school libraries by investing in recruiting and retaining state-certified school librarians and supporting staff working to broaden access to library collections.



## BANNED BOOKS WEEK - OCTOBER 1-7, 2023

- [Press Kit](#)
- [Download Banned Books Week Artwork](#)

## RURAL LIBRARY RESOURCES:

In rural areas, using the widely available toolkits and initiatives might not work. Since rural conservative audiences tend to be conservative, religious, and have lower levels of literacy and education attainment, they tend to hastily ignore or write off anything associated with organizations such as the ALA, Pen America, or ACLU; therefore, customizing the rhetoric used in these resources for rural audiences is important. (Essentially, *Librarianship 101: know your user*: resources written by urbanites for urban audiences aren't always the best to use with rural library patrons). (E.g. banned book initiatives focused on banned works that are beloved in communities, *The Lorax*, *Beatrix Potter*, the Bible ... using these works to frame these discussions has proven to be way more effective than using *Gender Queer* right out the gate).

Aligning anti-censorship and book-banning initiatives (like banned books week) with civic initiatives like (voter registration drives).. can be done in coordination with the Women's League of Voters or other civic groups.

Educating the public on the First Amendment. Middle Tennessee State University's Free Speech Center has a [great resource](#) for this that rural audiences will be less likely to balk at.

In rural areas with indigenous populations (most indigenous persons live in rural areas due to historic removal and subsequent redlining and marginalization), using texts pertaining to First Nations' influence on the Constitution and Bill of Rights (see also: [Retained by The People: A History of American Indians and the Bill of Rights by John R. Wunder](#)) ensures more equitable representation in these conversations.

#### [ARSL has an Advocacy Center](#)

Educate Library staff on censorship issues and mentor them: prepare them for what they might experience. Telling them to simply cite library policy and hand out a reconsideration form isn't good enough; empower them.

Finally, rural and urban library professionals need to support each other. It's written into our Competencies. More than half of American librarians are rural (Chase, 2021\*) and rural librarians most often feel siloed as they "hold the line" against censorship. Some rural librarians are not just fighting against community book banners, but also their own boards, and local/state governments. This is devastating for librarians in small communities who may be targeted and bullied in their communities outside of work hours; fighting censorship might take a bigger toll on rural librarians compared to their suburban and urban counterparts. Urban and suburban library professionals can help by recognizing underserved libraries and the people who run them, and by reaching out to rural librarians, brainstorming ideas, collaborating and volunteering time (many rural librarians do the jobs of 3-4 people and work overtime consistently), and simply providing moral support. The last part can't be stated enough.

## AUTHOR RESOURCES.

- [Dear Banned Author Letter-Writing Campaign](#)
  - **Organizer:** ALA (2021)
  - **Overview:** Dear Banned Author is a letter-writing campaign that encourages readers to write, tweet, or email banned or challenged authors during Banned Books Week, sharing what their stories mean to them.
    - [Ways to Participate](#)
    - Postcards ([printable](#), [tweetable](#), [e-postcards](#), [create your own](#))
    - [Banned Author Contact Info](#)
    - Tips for Hosting an [In-Person Program](#) or [Virtual Program](#)
    - [Tips for Tweeting](#)
    - [Logo](#)
- [Stop Book Bans Toolkit](#)
  - **Organizer:** The Authors Guild
  - **Overview:** (They) are calling on all interested members to help us launch a national letter-writing campaign by undertaking one or more of the following actions:
    - Send an email to your town or city school board
    - Write a short op-ed and send it to your local newspaper
    - Send an email or letter to your state representative expressing concern
- [RESOURCES FOR AUTHORS OF BANNED AND CHALLENGED BOOKS](#)
  - **Organizer:** National Coalition Against Censorship
  - **Overview:** A collection of Resources for Authors
    - How Do I know if my book is being challenged?
    - Why is my book being challenged?
      - [Seek Support](#)
      - [Protect Yourself](#)
      - [Additional Resources](#)
      - [Report Censorship](#)
- [Online Harassment Field Manual](#)
  - **Organizer:** Pen America
  - **Overview:** Field Manual offers concrete strategies for authors on how to defend themselves and others.
    - [Prepare](#)
    - [Respond](#)
    - [Self-Care](#)
    - [Legal](#)
    - [Support](#)

## Suggested People/Organizations to follow on Twitter:

- The Center for Public Integrity @publicintegrity
- ProPublica @propublica
- Pen America @PENAmerica
- National Coalition Against Censorship @ncacensorship
- Banned Books Week @BannedBooksWeek
- Dr. Tasslyn Magnusson @TasslynM
- FReadom @FReadomFighters
- Book Riot @BookRiot
- UniteAgainstBookBans @UABookBans
- Momsforsocialjustice @momsforsj
- OpenSecrets.org @OpenSecretsDC
- Freedom to Read Foundation @FTRF
- GetReadyStayReady @lucysantosgreen
- In general, follow librarians, school librarians, teachers

## Some Tools to use to find and contact your federal, state, county, and local elected representative:

- MyReps (<https://myreps.datamade.us/index.html>)
- VOTE 411 ([www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org)) - Launched by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) in October of 2006, VOTE411.org is a “one-stop-shop” for election related information.
- Openstates (<https://openstates.org/>): This site also tracks bills, reviews upcoming legislation, and sees how your local representatives are voting in your state.
- State-specific sites: (<https://www.usa.gov/states-and-territories>): This site lists all available state ran websites
- Open Secrets ([opensecrets.org](http://opensecrets.org)): “Nonpartisan, independent, and nonprofit, OpenSecrets is the nation's premier research group tracking money in U.S. politics and its effect on elections and public policy. Our mission is to track the flow of money in American politics and provide the data and analysis to strengthen democracy”
- Find your local District and School Board information: (<https://xqsuperschool.org/school-board-lookup>)

## Writing a Letter: What to say and how to say it:

- [Resource for guides, scripts, messaging, and communication](#)
- [uniteagainstbookbans.org/toolkit/](http://uniteagainstbookbans.org/toolkit/)

## Tracking Bills and Legislation

[FastDemocracy](#), a tool available both in a free and paid version, that allows you to track bills using filters to narrow your results.

[EveryLibrary Legislation of Concern](#), a list of bills by state that negatively impact libraries

## SOME OTHER SITES OF INTEREST:

- Americans of Conscience Checklist (<https://americansofconscience.com/>)
- Abolitionist Teaching Network (<https://abolitionistteachingnetwork.org/>) Abolitionist Teaching Network's mission is to develop and support those in the struggle for educational liberation by utilizing the intellectual work and direct action of Abolitionists in many forms.
- [Get Ready Stay Ready Community Action Toolkit](#) Resources for Civic Engagement
- [United for Libraries \(ALA\)](#): United for Libraries is a national network of enthusiastic library supporters who believe in the importance of libraries as the social and intellectual centers of communities and campuses. No one has a stronger voice for libraries than those who use them, raise money for them, and govern them. By
- uniting these voices, library supporters everywhere will become a real force to be reckoned with at the local, state, and national levels. United supports Library Trustees, Foundation Board members, and Friend Groups. They have a resources around Intellectual Freedom issues [HERE](#).

## SOME ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

- [HOW TO FIGHT BOOK BANS AND CHALLENGES: AN ANTI-CENSORSHIP TOOL KIT.](#)
- Book Riot | Kelly Jensen | Oct 7, 2021
- [BOOK BANS RISING RAPIDLY IN THE U.S., FREE SPEECH GROUPS FIND.](#) NYT

- |Alexandra Alter | April 20, 2023
- [THE PEOPLE WE NEED TO REACH AREN'T ONLINE](#). Book Riot | Kelly Jenson | April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023

How to Create a Google Alert for articles on Book Bans, Book Challenges, and Censorship: Link is [HERE](#). (you can set up these without a Google email account, but you do need to set up a google account with your personal/work email address.)

## RURAL AREA GUIDELINES:

- In rural areas, using the widely available toolkits and initiatives might not work. Since rural conservative audiences tend to be conservative, religious, and have lower levels of literacy and education attainment, they tend to hastily ignore or write off anything associated with organizations such as the ALA, Pen America, or ACLU; therefore, customizing the rhetoric used in these resources for rural audiences is important. (Essentially, *Librarianship 101: know your user*: resources written by urbanites for urban audiences aren't always the best to use with rural library patrons). (E.g. banned book initiatives focused on banned works that are beloved in communities, *The Lorax*, *Beatrix Potter*, the *Bible*... using these works to frame these discussions has proven to be way more effective than using *Gender Queer* right out the gate).
- Aligning anti-censorship and book-banning initiatives (like banned books week) with civic initiatives like (voter registration drives) can be done in coordination with the Women's League of Voters or other civic groups.
- Educating the public on the First Amendment. Middle Tennessee State University's Free Speech Center has a [great resource](#) for this that rural audiences will be less likely to balk at.
- In rural areas with indigenous populations (most indigenous persons live in rural areas due to historic removal and subsequent redlining and marginalization), using texts pertaining to First Nations' influence on the Constitution and Bill of Rights (see also: [Retained by The People: A History of American Indians and the Bill of Rights](#) by John R. Wunder) ensures more equitable representation in these conversations.
- [ARSL has an Advocacy Center](#)
- Educate Library staff on censorship issues and mentor them: prepare them for what they might experience. Telling them to simply cite library policy and hand out a reconsideration form isn't good enough; empower them.
- Finally, rural and urban library professionals need to support each other. It's written into our Competencies. More than half of American librarians are rural (Chase, 2021\*) and rural librarians most often feel siloed as they "hold the line" against censorship. Some rural librarians are not just fighting against community book banners, but also their own boards, and local/state governments. This is devastating for librarians in small communities who may be targeted and bullied in their communities outside of work hours; fighting censorship might take a bigger toll on rural librarians compared to their suburban and urban counterparts. Urban and suburban library professionals can help by recognizing underserved libraries and the people who run them, and by reaching out to rural librarians, brainstorming ideas, collaborating and volunteering time (many rural librarians do the jobs of 3-4 people and work overtime consistently), and simply providing moral support. The last part can't be stated enough.