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FULL NAME: Roxanne Newman, Mandeville
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Rupi Kaur, author of Milk and Honey

Public Libraries are meant to help the public develop a love of books and reading while also poiding free access to resources they may not otherwise have available. These libraries are the bedrock of our society. The idea that 'milk and honey', a book that has provided millions of people with support and comfort might now be banned from a public library breaks my heart. My readers have shared that they love this book because it helped them process some of life's most painful experiences from abuse to heartbreak. I've been told it's even helped young people recognize that they were being sexually assaulted. This recognition is lifesaving. 82% of sexual assault victims are girls under the age of 18. Taking away books that explore this abuse for the purpose of healing and catharsis doesn't erase the fact that abuse happens in real life- it just takes away another support system from those who need it most.

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taken off the shelves) may end up taking their
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Nomosecul problems in society. FULL NAME: Virginia Fortson
FULL NAME: Virginia Fortson
Mand., La 70998
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PUBLIC COMMENT JUNE 5, 2023 MEETING OF THE ST TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

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Pink Blue and you is appropriate for our libraries
FULL NAME: Barbara Mamoulides ADDRESS:

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FULL NAME: Roxanne Newman
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United Against Book Bans Resolution

Approved by a vote of the JCRC at the April 24, 2023 meeting.

The American Library Association reported 1,269 attempts to censor library books and resources in 2022, the highest number of attempted book bans since ALA began compiling data about censorship in libraries more than 20 years ago.

Jewish reasoning for opposing state and local book bans is rooted in a number of core values and beliefs that are central to Jewish tradition and culture. Some of these reasons include:

- Respect for knowledge and learning: Judaism places a high value on knowledge and learning. Jewish tradition emphasizes the importance of studying and questioning, and recognizes the power of education to transform individuals and society. Book bans represent a threat to this value by limiting access to information and ideas.
- Commitment to freedom of expression: Judaism has a long tradition of valuing freedom of expression and resisting censorship. Jewish history is full of examples of Jews who spoke out against oppression and challenged the status quo. Book bans represent a form of censorship that runs counter to Jewish values of free speech and expression.
- 3. Resistance to oppression: Jewish history is also marked by periods of oppression and persecution. Throughout these periods, Jews have resisted efforts to silence them and have worked to preserve their culture and identity. Book bans can be seen as part of a larger pattern of oppression and as a threat to Jewish culture and identity.
- 4. Embrace of diversity and pluralism: Jewish tradition recognizes the value of diversity and pluralism. Jews have historically lived in many different cultures and have been influenced by a wide range of ideas and perspectives. Book bans represent a narrow, one-sided view of the world that runs counter to Jewish values of tolerance and understanding.

Therefore, it is antithetical to Jewish values to ban books, as such a policy would be contrary to our fundamental beliefs and practices. The banning of books limits the pursuit of knowledge and the exploration of new ideas, which are essential to Jewish learning and scholarship.

Furthermore, the Jewish tradition teaches us to approach even controversial or challenging ideas with an open mind and a willingness to engage with them thoughtfully and critically. The

Talmud instructs us to "seek out the truth from whoever says it" (Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 23a), and to engage in respectful debate and discussion with those who hold differing viewpoints.

Banning books also runs counter to Jewish cultural values, which have historically been characterized by a deep appreciation for the power of the written word. From the Torah to the Talmud to contemporary Jewish literature, the written word has always been central to Jewish life and culture. Banning books would therefore represent a serious affront to Jewish cultural heritage.

As a Jewish community, we stand firm in our commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and the free exchange of ideas. We must resist any attempts to ban books or limit access to information, as such actions run counter to our most deeply held beliefs and practices.

Therefore, the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater New Orleans supports taking the following action steps:

- Speak out publicly against book bans and advocate for the protection of the freedom to read.
- Educate the Jewish community, the general public and public officials about the importance of free and open access to information, and the dangers of book banning.
- Advocate for legislative and administrative action at the local and state level that protects intellectual freedom and access to information.
- Build or join coalitions with other organizations and individuals who share a commitment to opposing book bans.
- Monitor and respond to instances of book banning and censorship in the community, and take action to oppose these efforts.

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PUBLIC COMMENT JUNE 5, 2023 MEETING OF THE ST TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

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FULL NAME: Cynthia Weatherly ADDRESS: _ Covincyton LA	
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Thank you to the St Tammany Parish Library Board of Control for the opportunity to be heard.

This opportunity is, of course, one of the beautiful things about a public library. It is a space where people can share different thoughts and perspectives in a respectful manner, for the betterment of all of us.

As an author and educator, whose books have been targeted for erasure, I want to respond to the claims that our books are harmful to young people.

As a professional educator, who has spent the past 20+ years studying, teaching, and writing about body safety and autonomy for young people, I am both familiar with, and disturbed by, the many ways that young people are harmed, mostly by adults, and sometimes by peers. Often this violence is sexual or gender based.

We know that young people cannot speak out about the ways they are being harmed if they lack the language to do so. Our books, which are created collaboratively with parents and mental health professionals, contain lifesaving information for young people, explaining to them precisely what bullying, harassment, and abuse can be, and what they can do about it if they, or someone they know, is being targeted or experiencing violence.

I am deeply concerned that under the guise of "protecting children", adults are trying to prevent young people from accessing this lifesaving information. I shudder to think of why an adult would not want a child to be able to recognize abuse, and speak about it.

Some claim that out books are pornographic. This is a lie. Laws offer us definitions regarding what is and is not obscene material. None of our books fit these definitions, and they have never been found by any medical or legal authority to fall under this category. People may not like our books, but that does not make them pornographic or obscene.

To the contrary, the tens of thousands of families, teachers, and professionals who read and use our books in their homes, classrooms, and clinics tell me that far from being pornographic, our books provide an opportunity for young people to learn, with trusted adults, about their bodies and their rights in ways that are not sexualized, but boundaried and inclusive. This opinion is shared by the committees of educators and librarians who have awarded our books with multiple awards in both Canada and the United States.

What those who call our books pornographic seem to actually mean is that they don't like the education our books offer. They may not like the way our books include more types of families. They may not like that our books reflect the beauty of lesbian, gay, bisexual families, of trans and nonbinary people, of intersex people, of disabled people. They may wish for a time when books told only the stories that are familiar to them and reflect their family. This is their right. They can choose to never look at our books, or to not share them with their own families. But I sincerely hope that they will not be empowered to tell other families what to read and how to speak. I hope they do not have the right to deny that we live in a world that is rich and beautiful not in spite of our differences but because of them.

Finally, I hope that the board affirms the trust that most of us put in our libraries and our librarians. Librarians are trained to be the trusted guides to young people (and the rest of us) helping us all access information we seek to make sense of our world, to live with each other in ways that feel respectful and safe. Librarians are not there to tell us what to read or not read, what to learn or not learn. They are vital community partners helping us, and our children, safely navigate the overwhelming sea of information and misinformation of our age.

Thank you for your time.

Cory Silverberg May 18, 2023

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FULL NAME: RObles Bohn community makingthis an

ADDRESS:

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Rustemeyer

The Director's Report:

It is very helpful to see the cost per challenge, noting it doesn't include the reading of the books that range from 32 to 700 pages or if I'm reading it right, it also does not include the costs of postage, paper, any additional copies of the books past one and other supplies or the opportunity cost for other projects that may be delayed, such as the strategic plan. So, this estimate is a conservative one.

Most every book on our challenged list, the number and method of production constitute an abuse of our system. Those of us who have been following the attack on our library are exasperated with the behavior of the few entitled complainers who've submitted statements of concern, who do not even read the books, yet cost our system time and money meant for the majority of parish residents.

We might conclude that the STPL reconsideration process is in need of changes to meet the current environment of book banning viruses. It is not okay that a dozen complainants are going to cost the rest of us paying taxes about \$85K (408*209). One complainant alone is responsible for \$70K of this amount. And this process is on track to last 3 years, if there are no more SOCs submitted. This amount does not take into account the PRRs submitted and the new person hired to do that job.

Challenging our freedom of speech should be an intentional process that takes several days instead of a few minutes and a knee-jerk reaction.

Here are a few ideas I've read about that may make sense:

- One of the amendments to SB7, which is still active in the current Louisiana legislative session, requires between 10-20 patrons objecting to the same material in order to trigger a review process. It should not include one complainant signing for a FB group. Individuals should be the complainants.
- If SB7 is adopted, it would be reasonable for each of the patrons objecting to
 the material to complete their own original Statement of Concern. With more
 than one complainant, we'd likely not all prepare for, assume the cost of and
 spend the time reviewing a book at an LBOC meeting for which no complainant
 appears.
- Limit SOC submittal to card carrying patrons
- Require a patron to come to the branch to collect an SOC form rather than make them so easily available online.

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to read with out parents, It should
be behind the equitor
FULL NAME: Rebecca McVey
ADDRESS: Madisonville, La
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ADDRESS: $\frac{51/\sqrt{e}}{\sqrt{e}}$
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library books. He insulting to librarians
and the review process is an incredible
waste of time & resources -
FULL NAME: Tackee Bell
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	This book needs to remain accessible
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	Joan Simon
ADDRESS:	Counton 70488
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Should read	a book. This is all a huge waste
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I am amazed that the people trying to Custail my child's across to this book just read what they consider the worst part aloud to my.
FULL NAME: Felicia Indest Rid here townght Shidell NA 20458
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& relats andance & gon resp. aduct
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PUBLIC COMMENT JUNE 5, 2023 MEETING OF THE ST TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member.

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ADDRESS: 15 a Nuge waste of time
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Atta

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this meeting. (Your name will not be called to approach the Board to speak.) Agenda Item #:
Keep the Book on the shelf.
FULL NAME: Kristificherege ADDRESS:
TELEPHONE NUMBER: EMAIL: This information is a Public Record.

	ation. Please return to designated library staff member. or each agenda item you wish to comment on.
/	
meeting. (Y	th to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this our name will not be called to approach the Board to speak.)
Agenda Iter	
Pi	nk, Blue + You should remain in an accessible
	in our libray, not restricted.
,	
FULL NAME:	Joan Simon
ADDRESS:	Covington 70483
TELEPHONE NUMBER	
	This information is a Public Record.

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this meeting. (Your name will not be called to approach the Board to speak.)
Agenda Item #: 2 F
I don't agree with censorship of any library
book. It's insulting to the librarians and an
incredible waste of time & resources-
FULL NAME: Tookin Hall
ADDRESS:
TELEPHONE NUMBER: EMAIL:
This information is a

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this
meeting. (Your name will <u>not</u> be called to approach the Board to speak.)
Agenda Item #:
"Sex is a Fungword" should remain
on the shelf in it's original +
appropriate lucano
FULL NAME: Kim Ture
ADDRESS: _ Marden W 70448
TELEPHONE NUMBER:
This information is a Public Record

I <u>do</u>	not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this
mee	ting. (Your name will <u>not</u> be called to approach the Board to speak.)
Ager	nda Item #:
Koy	she Book on the stull
I.13 in	uportant to tell the children the teath about
they be	des a how they work. Great Book for aguide,
FULL NAME:	Krista Feichser
ADDRESS:	- Hopic Heey
TELEPHONE NU	JMBER: EMAIL: WOOLG
	This information is a Public Record.

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of the meeting. (Your name will not be called to approach the Board to speak.)	nis
Agenda Item #:	
There is absolutely no reason for any concern over the	
book "Sex is a Funny Word." It should be returned to its	
appropriate place on our library shelves.	
FULL NAME: Joan Simon	
ADDRESS:	
TELEPHONE NUMBER: EMAIL: _	
This information is a	

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member.

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member. Please use one form for each agenda item you wish to comment on.

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this meeting. (Your name will <u>not</u> be called to approach the Board to speak.)

Agenda Item #: G - Sex is a winny word

This book is a tool for parents to talk to their kids about sex.

Please Keep this book. Me Decision to not read it is at the family level.

Pemoring book is removing a tool for parents.

FULL NAME: Karla P. Hardwick

ADDRESS: Madison ville, LA 70447

TELEPHONE NUMBER EMAIL:

This information is a Public Record.

✓ I <u>do not</u> wish to spe	ak but would like my written comment below	added to the public record of this
meeting. (Your name	e will not be called to approach the Board to s	peak.)
Agenda Item #:	20x Ba Fu	nny Word
It is my	opinion this book	could be
Veny confitsu	n' to your a second	2. It should
be placed le	tund the column to	only ve out by an
FULL NAME: PAPM	ne Misuraca	adult. It is
ADDRESS:	andeville	swarphidals.
		and but
TELEPHONE NUMBER:	EMAIL:	Jacqual
	This information is a Public Record.	mounding

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this meeting. (Your name will <u>not</u> be called to approach the Board to speak.) Agenda Item #: Sep us a Sunny World	
This book should be kept behind the counter	
It is not appropriate for a young child	
to read without their scerents.	
FULL NAME: Rebecca McVey	
ADDRESS: Madisonville, La	
TELEPHONE NUMBER:	
This information is a	

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this
meeting. (Your name will not be called to approach the Board to speak.)
Agenda Item #: _ Sex is a Eurnny word
I believe this book should be Rest
behind the circulation disk.
FULL NAME: Relecca myly
ADDRESS: Madisonville, La
TELEPHONE NUMBER: EMAIL: _
This information is a l

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of meeting. (Your name will <u>not</u> be called to approach the Board to speak.) Agenda Item #:	this
I do not think it should be	
available for a child to review	
without a pavent/ quavaian	
FULL NAME: Marchea	
ADDRESS: COD. NA 70433	
TELEPHONE NUMBER: EMAIL This information is a rabile record.	

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this meeting. (Your name will not be called to approach the Board to speak.) Agenda Item #: Beauce behand the country.
FULL NAME: - JOYCE H HAUN
ADDRESS:
This information is a Province Province

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this
meeting. (Your name will not be called to approach the Board to speak.)
Agenda Item #: \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \
This bod is a soxual education book
and therefore spould be behind the
content & checked out by a parent. Children makine
FULL NAME: at different axis & aparent unla
Know when best to allow a child to
ADDRESS: read this book - DAphne Misuracra
TELEPHONE NUMBER: EMAIL:
This information is a Public Record.

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public meeting. (Your name will not be called to approach the Board to speak.) Agenda Item #:	record of this
This above book needs to be read with	
a gaurdean or parents and kept behind	
epeinter	
FULL NAME: Rebella Melly	
ADDRESS: Madisonville	
TELEPHONE NUMBER:L: This information is a	·

I do not wish to speak but would like my written of meeting. (Your name will not be called to approach	comment below added to the public record of this the Board to speak.)
Agenda Item #: Who Ha	5 What "
good reference with su	pervision
not a book a child show	uld be able
to review without an	adult
FULL NAME: Mary Lea	
ADDRESS:	A 90433
TELEPHONE NUMBER: EMAIL:	

<u>do not</u> wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of thi meeting. (Your name will <u>not</u> be called to approach the Board to speak.) Agenda Item #:
Key the Book Dithe Shelf
FULL NAME: Mish Luchsergn
ADDRESS:
TELEPHONE NUMBER: EMAIL:
This information is a Public Record

meeting. (Y Agenda Iter	th to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this our name will <u>not</u> be called to approach the Board to speak.) I have an Shelf.
FULL NAME:	ynthia Weatherly
ADDRESS: _	Covington LA 70435
TELEPHONE NUMBER	: EMAIL: This information is a Public/Record.

PUBLIC COMMENT

JUNE 5, 2023 MEETING OF THE ST TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this meeting. (Your name will <u>not</u> be called to approach the Board to speak.) Agenda Item #: \text{H}
Who Has What
Leep on the Shelf Do not restrict
ADDRESS: Laura Dinapolis Covinsta LA
TELEPHONE NUMBER:MAIL: This information is a Public Record.

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this meeting. (Your name will <u>not</u> be called to approach the Board to speak.) Agenda Item #:
Please keep the book "Who Has Whor"
in its original + appropriate location
in our PUBLICLY FUNDED library.
FULL NAME: Kin Tune
MONDENILL, 70448
TELEPHONE NUMBER EMAIL:

I do not wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member. Please use one form for each agenda item you wish to comment on.

meeting. (Your name will not be called to approach the Board to speak.)

Agenda Item #: H - who Has what
This book is also a tool for parents to use to talk to their kids.
As long as their is no act between 2 people that is sexual, it should n
or banned. The decision whether or not to read a book should take place
decision for the family.
FULL NAME: Karla P. Hardwick
ADDRESS: Madison ville, LA70447
TELEPHONE NUMBER: EMAIL: _
This information is a Public Record.

I <u>do not</u> wish to speak but would like my written comment below added to the public record of this meeting. (Your name will <u>not</u> be called to approach the Board to speak.) Agenda Item #:
" Who Mas What " is an important book that needs
to remain unrestricted, subject only to the library's
Clinest card system
FULL NAME: Soan Simon
ADDRESS: Coungton 70433
TELEPHONE NUMBER: EMAIL: EMAIL:

I do not wish to speak by	ut would like my written comment below a	dded to the public record of this
	I <u>not</u> be called to approach the Board to spe	
Agenda Item #:		
you should nog VIVE	you Stall Cegulature	Lo make a book
complaint. Tomorrow		m/(probably
pass SB7 that re	guines 10 people to	mala 9 land
FULL NAME: Rebecen	Sohm	- bother it can't
ADDRESS:	70471	noviewed.
		Mid- Millips s
TELEPHONE NUMBER:	EMAIL:	WALLING OUT JUM
	This information is a Public Record.	and mytales [1]