



Agenda Item Summary

File #: RES 23-215, **Version:** 1

Submitted By

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Reviewed By

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Agenda Item Title

A Resolution Adopting the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement and Declaring the Village of Oak Park as a Book Sanctuary Community

Overview

This is a resolution adopting the American Library Association's Free to Read Statement and declaring the Village of Oak Park a book sanctuary community. A book sanctuary collects and protect endangered books; make those books broadly accessible; host book talks and events, including sparking conversations about diverse characters and stories; and educate others on the history of book banning and burning.

Recommendation

Adopt the Resolution.

Background

Over the last several years, there has been a significant increase in censorship activities in the United States resulting in books being removed from library shelves and schools, and book bans often seek to impose restrictions on all students and families based on the political, ideological, or cultural preferences of the individuals calling for book bans

Recently, the Illinois General Assembly and Illinois Governor JB Pritzker in enacting Public Act 103-0100 on June 12, 2023, which declares it to be the "policy of the State to encourage and protect the freedom of libraries and library systems to acquire materials without external limitation and to be protected against attempts to ban, remove, or otherwise restrict access to books or other materials."

Fiscal Impact

N/A

DEI Impact

Numerous books referring to LGBTQ+ themes or LGBTQ+ characters have been banned in the United States this year. Overall, people from marginalized backgrounds, are facing a heightened risk of being banned.

Establishing a book sanctuary ensures that the community especially, youth has access to a diverse range of stories and perspectives. That are often from historically marginalized backgrounds, whose communities are

often underrepresented in literature. A Book Sanctuary supports educators and librarians who are operating in some states in an increasingly punitive and surveillance-oriented environment with a chilling effect on teaching and learning. It also supports authors whose works are being targeted; and parents who want to raise students in schools that remain open to curiosity, discovery, and the freedom to read.

Alternatives

The alternative to this recommendation could be to delay action to gain additional information.

Previous Board Action

N/A

Citizen Advisory Commission Action

N/A

Anticipated Future Actions/Commitments

N/A

Intergovernmental Cooperation Opportunities

The Resolution is proposed in partnership with Oak Park Public Library.