

Resolution in Support of Arlington County Libraries and their Role as Book Sanctuaries
Adopted: September 26, 2023

WHEREAS, public libraries have come under increasing pressure nationwide from groups and individuals seeking to restrict access to books; and

WHEREAS, the County Board supports Arlington Public Library and the community's freedom to read; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County is a signatory to the Freedom to Read statement provided by the American Library Association which declares the importance of protecting the freedom of all individuals to read freely without fear of suppression or censorship; and

WHEREAS, upholding the freedom to read and supporting public libraries calls for active engagement from community members to resist attempts by individuals or groups to limit access to information, ideas and the diversity of viewpoints as provided by the public library; and

WHEREAS, Arlington Public Library's mission is to champion the power of stories, information and ideas; to create space for culture and connection and to embrace inclusion and diverse points of view; and

WHEREAS, Arlington Public Library ensures a safe, welcoming environment for the free exploration of a broad range of ideas and provides encouragement and opportunities for all community members; and

WHEREAS, the library gives a voice to people whose identities and stories have traditionally been underrepresented, such as people of color, the LGBTQIA+ community and/or persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, public libraries are cornerstones of strong communities, providing free access to ideas and information; and

WHEREAS, the Arlington Public Library team is dedicated to serving our diverse community through numerous ways, such as finding a specific book for a patron, helping a child learn to read or hosting a community program; and

WHEREAS, all members of the community can support their public library by signing up for library cards, borrowing materials, attending a program or by speaking about the value of libraries at public events and forums; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Arlington County Board declares Arlington County libraries as Book Sanctuaries, committed to protecting banned and challenged books and the right of the residents of Arlington to read the books they choose without fear of suppression.

ADOPTED on this 26th day of September 2023