



Connecticut
Library Consortium

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CLC, CLA, and CASL Urge Connecticut Lawmakers to Protect the Freedom to Read, Pass S.B. 1271

MIDDLETOWN, Conn. – May 14, 2025 – The [Connecticut Library Consortium](#), [Connecticut Library Association](#), and the [Connecticut Association of School Librarians](#), urge Connecticut lawmakers to pass [Senate Bill 1271](#), legislation to protect the right to read, support local decision-making on book selection and challenges, and keep libraries safe from political targeting.

“In contrast to the algorithm-fed content on the internet and social media, library collections are curated by librarians who care deeply about the communities we serve, and S.B. 1271 establishes a set of guidelines to ensure our decisions adhere to a fair and responsible process,” said **Ellen Paul, Executive Director of the Connecticut Library Consortium**. “We are committed to representing all views, which means offering a wide range of books, some familiar, some challenging, some new, but all there to help people grow.”

The bill ensures that local library boards retain control over collection decisions and book challenges, blocking outside attempts to politicize or interfere with what’s available on the shelves. The bill was revised from earlier versions to remove the ability for libraries to bring defamation suits, focusing instead on preserving public trust and shielding library staff from harassment.

“The Freedom to Read legislation is about ensuring we hear the concerns of our community through an established process and without the noise of performative politics,” said **Scott Jarzombek, President of the Connecticut Library Association**. “People target librarians for simply doing their job, which is simply to make sure everyone has the chance to see themselves in a book in the comfort and safety of our libraries.”

School libraries, one of the only places students can reliably access books, have been under siege too.

“As a school librarian, I see the impact every day,” said **Jenny Lussier, President of the Connecticut Association of School Librarians**. “Students deserve a place to explore who they are and who they might become. Most parents agree with us that our schools are a better place for self-exploration than social media. S.B. 1271 is rational not radical, putting decision-making back in the hands of Boards of Education members, trusted local educators and librarians.”

Generally, S.B. 1271 would do the following:

- **Bans Book Removal Simply Because Someone Finds It Offensive.** The bill makes it clear: *no book can be removed from a public or school library just because someone is offended by it.* That kind of subjective censorship is off the table. Books must only be removed for legitimate

educational or professional reasons—not because of who wrote them or what viewpoints they represent.

- **Creates a Transparent, Community-Driven Process for Book Challenges** Only residents of a town (for public libraries) or parents, students, and school staff (for school libraries) can file official challenges. And they must explain, in writing, exactly what part of the book they object to and why. Anonymous or politically motivated campaigns from outside the community don't get a say.
- **Protects Librarians from Legal and Personal Attacks.** The bill protects librarians and library staff from being sued or punished simply for doing their jobs—curating collections that meet the needs of their communities using professional standards. If they follow the policies, they can't be held personally liable.
- **Keeps Challenged Books on the Shelf While Reviews Are Underway.** Books being challenged can't just be yanked off the shelves. They must stay available for checkout during the entire review process. This ensures that no one person or group can silence access before a fair decision is made.
- **Ensures Collection Policies Reflect a Diverse, Inclusive Society.** Every library must adopt and publicly share clear policies that guarantee collections serve *all* readers and protect against discrimination. That includes materials that reflect varied backgrounds, identities, and viewpoints. Libraries aren't supposed to mirror one perspective—they're meant to reflect the world we live in.

The three organizations backing this bill ask the public to get involved. Lawmakers need to hear directly from residents who value freedom of choice and want libraries to remain safe, inclusive, and welcoming.

Find your State of [Connecticut representatives here](#).

Take action here: [SaveSchoolLibrarians.org/caslfreedomtoread2025](#).

About Connecticut Library Consortium

The Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC) is a non-profit membership group serving over 970 public, academic, school and special libraries. The CLC leverages the collective power of our members to initiate cost-effective, value-added services to strengthen libraries. We believe the libraries are fundamental to a literate, equitable and just society. Learn more at <https://www.ctlibrarians.org/>.

About Connecticut Library Association

The Connecticut Library Association (CLA) is a 125+-year-old association of professional and paraprofessional library staff working together for the betterment of the state's people. CLA advises members, presents to municipalities and library-adjacent groups on the operation and maintenance of public, school, academic, and special libraries. CLA members work to ensure that all residents of Connecticut, regardless of geographic location, social or economic status, age, level of physical or intellectual ability, cultural background, religious beliefs, size, or citizenship status have access to essential information, technologies, and collections. Learn more at <https://ctlibraryassociation.org/>.

About Connecticut Association of School Librarians

CASL is committed to excellence in education by ensuring that students are active readers and effective

users of ideas and information to become lifelong learners. The Association provides leadership, professional development, publicity, networking and support to the Connecticut school library community. CASL supports licensed, highly qualified library media specialists and fully funded library programs in all K-12 schools. <https://casl.wildapricot.org/>.

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