Statement Against Efforts to Ban Books in Public Schools and Libraries

Endorsed May 2023

WHEREAS, the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) is the national association of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) attorneys, judges, law professors and law students, representing the interests of over 60,000 attorneys and about 90 national, state, and local AAPI bar associations; NAPABA members include solo practitioners, large firm lawyers, corporate counsel, legal service and non-profit attorneys, law students, law professors, and lawyers serving at all levels of the government and military; and NAPABA is committed to addressing civil rights issues confronting AAPI communities and people of color;

WHEREAS, NAPABA is the national voice for the AAPI legal profession; promotes justice, equity, and opportunity for AAPI individuals and communities; and fosters professional development, legal scholarship, advocacy, and community involvement;

WHEREAS, book bans and challenges to books in public schools and libraries across the nation have been increasing since late 2020. In the past, book bans were typically regarded as local issues, but has recently grown into a political movement, funded at the local, state, and national levels; and

WHEREAS, many of the targeted books concern LGBTQ+ characters, characters of color, and/or race/racism in America;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT NAPABA:

1. Urges the federal, local, and state governments to work to defend and protect the principles of the First Amendment, as described above;

2. Urges that book challenges should be based on sound academic reasoning in the best educational interest of the child and not on any political ideology;

3. Authorizes its president, board, and staff to communicate the content of this resolution to its members, affiliates, other bar associations, members of Congress, the Administration, the press, and others to take steps to implement this resolution, as they deem necessary; and

4. Supports this resolution as a policy position until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.