



**SB 738 Support
Freedom to Read Act
Senate of Maryland Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**

Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Committee:

My name is Jamie Watson, and I am the Collection Development manager at Baltimore County Public Library. I am here today to speak in favor of SB738.

I have nearly 30 years of public library experience in Ohio and Maryland, including at Enoch Pratt Free Library, Harford County Public Library and currently Baltimore County. At each of these institutions, a collection development policy, such as is required in SB738, was a backbone of the library's selection process. Each systems administration and their library board has the ability to create their own policy that meets the needs and interests of their community.

Collection development librarians follow these policies every day. We must know about publishing trends, about community demographics, about childhood and teen development. We curate a library collection that serves all of our residents and each of these residents have the opportunity to decide which library books are for them and they are the only ones who can decide that. Personally, I don't care for sad animal books or super sweet romance novels. That is my choice, but I purchase these books for our library collection. Each individual should have this ability to determine what to read and what to leave on the shelf for others, and SB738 assures that the expertise of librarians is honored, and the interest of the public to choose their reading material is also honored.

Sincerely,

Jamie Watson
Collection Development Manager