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The President's Column

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The President's Column

Libraries in the Southeast, like others nationwide, have seen an influx of censorship attempts and book challenges over the past few years. Unlike challenges of the past, new challenges seem to target more than just books: they question the library's ability to serve its community at its very core. Over 100 years ago, The Southeastern Library Association formed in order to support libraries and strengthen the connections between our libraries. We stand with ALA, ACRL, and other advocates who support library workers and the freedom to read.

SELA supports the unyielding foundation of the library mission: to protect the freedom to read through equal access while providing resources to communities that allow citizens to learn at all levels throughout their lives. We cannot grow as a society if we ban learning about the people, places, and ideas that we don't understand; and we cannot delude ourselves into supporting censorship that never allows us the opportunity of understanding.

SELA stands in support of all of our libraries and educators who are facing unjustified inquiries into their stacks, purchasing methods, and instruction in order to suppress unpopular ideas and restrict teaching books that may be controversial to some. We oppose blatant accusations of librarians and teachers being labeled as un-American for simply protecting the rights of our readers and encouraging lifelong learning through books that question our diversity, equality, justice, religion, self-exploration, and the world in which we live.

We support our state library associations in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia in their dedication to protect the freedom to read and fight against censorship in libraries and schools.

If we don't work together, we don't work at all. Please email me with any questions or concerns you are having in SELA. I am happy to listen to your issues as well as place you with a team where your service will make your membership more meaningful and your contributions will make SELA stronger.



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