

HOUSE No. 4005

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

James K. Hawkins

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act ensuring freedom to read in the Commonwealth.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>6/14/2023</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>6/14/2023</i>
<i>Francisco E. Paulino</i>	<i>16th Essex</i>	<i>6/15/2023</i>
<i>Patricia A. Haddad</i>	<i>5th Bristol</i>	<i>6/16/2023</i>
<i>David Paul Linsky</i>	<i>5th Middlesex</i>	<i>6/16/2023</i>
<i>Margaret R. Scarsdale</i>	<i>1st Middlesex</i>	<i>6/21/2023</i>
<i>Jennifer Balinsky Armini</i>	<i>8th Essex</i>	<i>6/21/2023</i>
<i>Mike Connolly</i>	<i>26th Middlesex</i>	<i>6/22/2023</i>
<i>Michelle L. Ciccolo</i>	<i>15th Middlesex</i>	<i>6/26/2023</i>
<i>Carmine Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>6/29/2023</i>
<i>Vanna Howard</i>	<i>17th Middlesex</i>	<i>7/2/2023</i>
<i>Christine P. Barber</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>	<i>7/6/2023</i>
<i>Steven Owens</i>	<i>29th Middlesex</i>	<i>7/10/2023</i>
<i>Samantha Montaño</i>	<i>15th Suffolk</i>	<i>7/11/2023</i>
<i>Carol A. Doherty</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>	<i>7/12/2023</i>
<i>Michael J. Barrett</i>	<i>Third Middlesex</i>	<i>8/31/2023</i>
<i>Natalie M. Blais</i>	<i>1st Franklin</i>	<i>10/27/2023</i>
<i>John Barrett, III</i>	<i>1st Berkshire</i>	<i>10/30/2023</i>

<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>10/30/2023</i>
<i>Estela A. Reyes</i>	<i>4th Essex</i>	<i>10/30/2023</i>
<i>Tommy Vitolo</i>	<i>15th Norfolk</i>	<i>10/30/2023</i>
<i>Adrian C. Madaro</i>	<i>1st Suffolk</i>	<i>11/15/2023</i>
<i>Nick Collins</i>	<i>First Suffolk</i>	<i>1/19/2024</i>
<i>Paul R. Feeney</i>	<i>Bristol and Norfolk</i>	<i>2/20/2024</i>

HOUSE No. 4005

By Representative Hawkins of Attleboro, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of James K. Hawkins and others for legislation to encourage the improvement of free libraries and library systems. Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act ensuring freedom to read in the Commonwealth.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Because the state has a financial responsibility in promoting public
2 education, and because the public library is a vital agency serving all levels of the educational
3 process, it is hereby declared to be the policy of the state to encourage the improvement of free
4 libraries and library systems to encourage cooperation among all types of libraries in promoting
5 the sharing of library resources, including digital resources. In keeping with this policy, the
6 provision is hereby made for a program of state grants designed to establish, develop and operate
7 a network of library systems covering the entire state.

8 It is further declared to be the policy of the State to encourage and protect the freedom of
9 libraries and library systems to acquire materials without external limitations and to be protected
10 against attempts to ban, remove, or otherwise restrict access to books or other materials.

11 The State Librarian and their staff shall administer the provisions of this Act and shall
12 prescribe such rules and regulations as are necessary to carry the provisions of this Act into
13 effect.

14 The rules and regulations established by the State Librarian for the administration of this
15 Act shall be designed to achieve the following standards and objectives:

16 A. provide library service for every citizen in the state by extending library facilities to
17 areas not now served.

18 B. provide library materials for student needs at every educational level.

19 C. provide adequate library materials to satisfy the reference and research needs of the
20 people of this state.

21 D. provide an adequate staff of professionally trained librarians for the state.

22 E. adopt the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights that indicates
23 materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval or, in
24 the alternative, develop a written statement declaring the inherent authority of the library or
25 library system to provide an adequate collection stock of books and other materials sufficient in
26 size and varied in kind and subject matter to satisfy the library needs of the people of this state
27 and prohibit the practice of banning specific books or resources.

28 F. provide adequate library outlets and facilities convenient in time and place to serve the
29 people of this state.

30 G. encourage existing and new libraries to develop library systems serving a sufficiently
31 large population to support adequate library service at a reasonable cost.

32 H. foster the economic and efficient utilization of public funds.

33 The Advisory Committee of the Massachusetts State Library shall confer with, advise,
34 and make recommendations to the State Librarian regarding any matter under this Act,
35 particularly regarding the formation of library systems.

36 This Act shall take effect upon passage.