

LWVLA Library Freedoms Bills/Instruments 2023 Legislative Session (updated 4/22/2023)

Committee	Bill Number	Author, Party & District	Summary	LWVLA Position
House Municipal, Parochial, and Local Affairs	<a href="#">HB 25</a>	Paul Hollis (R-Covington)	LIBRARIES: Provides relative to parish and municipal libraries	<p><b>OPPOSE</b></p> <p>The bill risks reducing the number of members of some library boards by capping them at seven members. If a board is capped at the minimum of five members, parish governing authorities would then determine all five appointments, possibly taking away appointments that would go to other branches of local government, such as mayors, as well as universities and other key stakeholders in public libraries. Placing all or nearly all power over library boards thus might raise separation of power issues and nondelegation doctrine issues, if parish executives must cede power to the local legislative branches in parish councils and police juries.</p>
House Committee on Commerce	<a href="#">SB 77</a>	Laurie Schlegel (R-Metairie)	ATTORNEY GENERAL: Provides for attorney general investigation for publishers and distributors of material harmful to minors	<p><b>OPPOSE</b></p> <p>Act 440 passed last year creating civil remedies for publication and distribution of material alleged to be harmful to minors. This bill goes further, authorizing attorney general investigations for failure to provide age verification of access on online sites that contain said material, thus authorizing state money and time to be allocated to this purpose. It is not clear that age verification software would be effective in preventing access. And, as with many similar measures proposed to limit material deemed to be “pornographic,” it is likely to be deployed against materials aimed at LGBTQ+ communities. In light of other proposed anti-library freedom legislation this session, this is likely that this legislation, if enacted, would also be used to target these communities, along with public libraries that provide internet access.</p>
House Municipal, Parochial, and Local Affairs	<a href="#">HB 102</a>	Julie Emerson (R-Carencro)	LIBRARIES: Provides relative to access to certain materials in public libraries	<p><b>OPPOSE</b></p> <p>Part of an effort at book-banning currently afoot in the state, this bill aims to restrict minors’ access to “sexually explicit material.” The nature of this material is left undefined, but any restriction of access or censorship of library materials violates LWV principles on Citizen Rights and Individual</p>

				<p>Freedoms in accessing library materials. The procedures for implementing such restriction that have already transpired in Louisiana already arguably violate the Citizen’s Right to Know about the operations of government, on top of the restrictions contained in the library materials, especially in determination of what is “sexually explicit” or violates “community standards.” Finally, the targeting of these restrictive initiatives has disproportionated affected LGBTQ+ people and young people, contravening LWV policies of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Where restrictions are made opt-out instead of opt-in, they also unnecessarily burden parents who wish for their children to have broad access to library materials.</p>
<p><b>Senate Education</b></p>	<p><a href="#">SB 7</a></p>	<p><b>Heather Cloud (R-New Iberia)</b></p>	<p>LIBRARIES: Provides relative to access to certain materials in public libraries.</p>	<p><b>OPPOSE</b></p> <p>Part of an effort at book-banning currently afoot in the state, his bill aims to restrict minors’ access to “sexually explicit material.” The nature of this material is left undefined, but any restriction of access or censorship of library materials violates LWV principles on Citizen Rights and Individual Freedoms in accessing library materials. The procedures for implementing such restriction that have already transpired in Louisiana already arguably violate the Citizen’s Right to Know about the operations of government, on top of the restrictions contained in the library materials, especially in determination of what is “sexually explicit” or violates “community standards.” Finally, the targeting of these restrictive initiatives has disproportionated affected LGBTQ+ people and young people, contravening LWV policies of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Where restrictions are made opt-out instead of opt-in, they also unnecessarily burden parents who wish for their children to have broad access to library materials.</p>