



# IOWA CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY

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## **The Iowa City Public Library Board of Trustees Supports an Independent, Nonpolitical State Library of Iowa**

This year's legislative session will prove to be a significant one for the people of Iowa, and if we do not act in the best interests of our citizens, we stand to witness irreparable damage to libraries in our state.

The current proposal to drastically reorganize the state government has the potential to limit the liberties and rights of Iowans to access knowledge. We feel that this is a critical turning point for the future of our State, and stand in strong opposition to these measures.

Reorganization bills SSB1123 and HB126 move the State Library to the Department of Administrative Services. This would eliminate the oversight of the current citizen-led commission, making the State Librarian a political appointee. This will transform the State Library of Iowa from one of the most open and accessible decision-making state libraries to one of the least equitable and transparent in the nation. A library's unique position in a community requires specialized support, funding, and the ability for all Iowans to have access to all materials throughout the state.

The State Library oversees crucial services to all public libraries and the communities they serve. From distributing federal funds to providing training to librarians to ensuring public libraries are meeting accreditation standards, the State Library ensures all Iowans have access to information and library resources. If this legislation passes, it will put all public libraries in a difficult position to weigh the value of state funding against core library standards.

Restructuring administrative oversight of these institutions will make every public library vulnerable to shifting political motivations. Libraries have long stood as entities independent of political fluctuations, each considering how to best serve their community. The Iowa City Public Library Board of Trustees supports the State Library of Iowa as the infrastructure for funding and collaboration in Iowa's exceptional public library system.

Adopted and approved by the Iowa City Public Library Board of Trustees on March 6, 2023.