



Secretary Of State Issues Comments On Pritzker's Law To Prevent Book Ban

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SPRINGFIELD - Landmark legislation to prevent book banning was signed into law by Governor JB Pritzker, Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias announced today.

This new law sets a nationwide precedent in the fight against book bans, as libraries and librarians face unprecedented censorship of books and resources, including in Illinois. The bill passed the Illinois House in March and the Senate in May.

Giannoulias, who also serves as the State Librarian, initiated HB 2789 after extremist groups – including the far-right nationalist group, the Proud Boys – targeted Illinois libraries, divided communities and harassed librarians, despite that the books are not required reading.

“The concept of banning books contradicts the very essence of what our country stands for,” said Secretary Giannoulias. “It also defies what education is all about: teaching our children to think for themselves. This landmark law is a triumph for our democracy, a win for First Amendment Rights, and a great victory for future generations.”

House Bill 2789, sponsored by State Rep. Anne Stava-Murray (81st District – Downers Grove) and Sen. Laura Murphy (28th District – Elk Grove Village), allows Giannoulias’ office to authorize grant funding only to libraries that adhere to the American Library Association’s (ALA) Library Bill of Rights or that issue a statement prohibiting the practice of banning books or resources. The ALA Bill of Rights states that reading materials should not be removed or restricted because of partisan or personal disapproval.

Currently, Illinois law does not contain language related to book banning or eligibility for state grants if a library bans items from its collection. Last fiscal year, the Secretary

of State's office awarded 1,631 grants to Illinois libraries totaling more than \$62 million. Of those, 97% of the grants were awarded to public and school libraries, with public libraries receiving 877 grants and school libraries securing 712 grants.

According to the Chicago-based ALA, there were 67 attempts to ban books in Illinois in 2022, increasing from 41 the previous year.