**Resolution: The Importance of Library Boards**

**MONTANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION**

**April 4, 2022**

WHEREAS, Montana statutes recognize the importance of independent public library boards; and

WHEREAS, Montana Public Library Boards are comprised of local citizens who understand and respect the rights of their individual community members; and

WHEREAS, public library boards must uphold the standards for intellectual freedom under the First Amendment of the U.S Constitution; and

WHEREAS, public library boards make and implement library policy that the right to read is basic to the intellectual freedom of our community; and

WHEREAS, setting library policy includes deciding what materials to include in the library collection, developing guidelines on library Internet use, and protecting patron confidentiality; and

WHEREAS, removing library material solely on the basis of its content may amount to censorship in violation of the First Amendment; and

WHEREAS, recently there have been efforts to execute campaigns of censorship against certain kinds of books held by public libraries; and

WHEREAS, all Montana citizens have the right to select material for themselves, but not to restrict what others may choose; and

WHEREAS, public library boards are committed to making sure that when anyone enters the library they are able to find materials that reflect who they are and what they believe, as well as those that might challenge or illuminate; and

WHEREAS, public library boards will continue to stand for tolerance and respect for opposing points of view that is the bedrock of our democratic society;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montana Library Association (MLA) recognizes the importance of public library boards and will oppose bills that undermine public library board authority.

Adopted by the Montana Library Association

April 4, 2022