

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR LINDSEY P. HORVATH

September 30, 2025

Proclaiming Banned Books Week October 5, 2025 in LA County

Banned Books Week was established in 1982 by an international coalition of organizations in response to a sharp rise in challenges to books in libraries, bookstores, and schools. This nationwide annual event unites librarians, authors, educators, booksellers, journalists, publishers, and readers in a shared commitment to the freedom to read and express ideas. The initiative highlights ongoing attempts across the country to remove or restrict access to books and raises awareness of the harmful effects of censorship. This year, Banned Books Week will take place from October 5–11, 2025. The theme, “Censorship Is So 1984. Read for Your Rights,” serves as a powerful reminder that the right to read belongs to everyone, that censorship has no place in a free society, and defending that right remains as important as ever.

Earlier this year, the American Library Association (ALA) released its highly anticipated *Top 10 Most Challenged Books* list as part of the 2025 *State of America’s Libraries Report*, which highlights how libraries continue to serve their communities amid growing threats to intellectual freedom. Book challenges have remained alarmingly

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high, with nearly 72% initiated not by parents, but by organized groups and elected officials. While some states enacted laws to restrict access to materials and intimidate library workers, there were also positive developments including court rulings and state-level actions that upheld the right to read and supported those who defend it. According to the ALA, 2,452 unique titles were banned or challenged in public, school, and academic libraries in 2024. The most commonly cited reasons for these censorship attempts included false claims of obscenity, the presence of LGBTQIA+ characters or themes, and the discussion of topics such as race, racism, equity, and social justice.

In an effort to expand access to library books, services, and resources, LA County Library developed the Books Unbanned digital card in response to a June 2023 [motion](#) from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, authored by Supervisors Horvath and Hahn, which directed the Library to expand the availability of library cards to teens statewide in an effort to support young people without access to certain banned books, and to determine how to fund the purchase of additional eBook and audiobook copies of frequently banned titles. LA County Library's Books Unbanned initiative offers teenagers ages 13–18 across California free and unrestricted access to the department's entire digital eBook and audiobook collection on Libby, by OverDrive, which includes many frequently-banned titles, making it possible for teenagers to read what they want so they can develop their own informed opinions on various issues and topics. This is a partnership with the Public Libraries in Brooklyn, Seattle, Boston, and San Diego to help counteract the increasing number of book bans and challenges cropping up across the nation.

In February 2023, the Board of Supervisors voted to approve a [motion](#) authored

by Supervisors Horvath and Barger to ensure reliable access to reading materials for individuals incarcerated in Los Angeles County Jails. This initiative led to a formal partnership between LA County Library and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, facilitating the donation of books to jail facilities. The program is promoted through the Library's website, where community members are encouraged to donate gently used books and materials at their nearest County library location. As of August 2025, the Library has provided LASD with over 1,100 boxes of donated materials, most of which consisted of paperback novels, magazines, self-help books, spiritual/religious books, and educational materials. This collaborative effort underscores the County's commitment to both supporting rehabilitation and education for those incarcerated and protecting the greater freedom to read.

On October 5, 2025, LA County Library will hold its inaugural *Next Chapter Writers' Summit*, a free daylong celebration of books, storytelling, and belonging at the West Hollywood Library, West Hollywood Aquatic Center and West Hollywood Park. This year's theme centers on celebrating LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC voices—writers whose stories, perspectives, and lived experiences are vital to a vibrant and diverse literary landscape, especially at a time when the freedom to read is under threat. The event is geared toward aspiring writers, devoted readers, and industry professionals and will bring together narratives from across Los Angeles County and beyond for an inspiring day of panels, author talks, workshops, and community connection. County Librarian, Dr. Skye Patrick, will engage in conversations with notable and award-winning authors Jacqueline Woodson, Justin Torres, and Adam Silvera.

At its core, Banned Books Week champions the freedom to read, which is a

fundamental right in any democratic society. Efforts to censor what people can read often limits access to diverse perspectives and voices. Over the past year, libraries and museums across the country have faced mass layoffs and funding restrictions, significantly impacting the programs and services they provide to their communities. These challenges only underscore the urgent need to advocate for access to information and institutions that protect intellectual freedom for all.

I, THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors proclaim October 5-11, 2025, as Banned Books Week to celebrate the freedom to read and raise awareness about the harms caused by censorship.

I, FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct all relevant County departments including but not limited to the Library, Parks and Recreation, Arts and Culture, Youth Development, Los Angeles County Office of Education, to share information about the Writers' Summit.
2. Instruct the Library and Public Defender's Office to meet with the Sheriff's Department on an annual basis to share information and updates about the Books for Jails Program.

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