Office of Governor Ron DeSantis  
State of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 S. Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

July 31, 2024

Dear Governor DeSantis:

We write as a collective of Florida teachers, media specialists, parents, students, school board members, union leaders, faith leaders, authors, and community members to express our unified concern over public education and the degradation of core constitutional liberties. We ask you, as constituents, to end the wave of educational censorship and book bans that are harming Florida’s children and the state’s public education system.

State legislation and policies passed under your leadership have resulted in Florida banning the most books in the country by more than 40%; shuttering interfaith, women, and LGBTQ+ centers; removing critical resources as diversity, equity and inclusion has been weaponized and demonized across the state; and interfering with standard curriculum to block reproductive health education, interject religious perspectives, such as requiring lessons in Judeo-Christian values, and erase and distort the historical struggles for equality experienced by women and Black, Latine, Indigenous, Asian, LGBTQ+ Americans, and the many communities that have been historically targeted and marginalized.

Under your leadership, Florida educators are fleeing the state at a time when educator shortages are at an all time high. We have recently watched, with much heartache, the closure of public schools across the state as your administration’s policies continue to pull money from public education. It is distressing to see students, educators, and Floridians of all walks of life targeted and denied core freedoms to speak and express themselves.

All of us have been harmed, and continue to be harmed, by these policies. We are educators whose voices are chilled into silence due to overly broad, vague, punitive, and discriminatory policies. We are students, scared to be ourselves, to share our identities and perspectives, especially as books representing diverse perspectives and identities are yanked from the shelves and robust class discussions can be used as evidence to attack a beloved educator. We are parents, horrified at the targeting of our children, furious over the ideological restrictions on their education, and fed up with the political attacks on our community schools and the people
dedicated to protecting access to them. We are labor union leaders, targeted when educators need us the most. We are faith leaders, dismayed at the deteriorating line between church and state in public education. As Floridians, we demand the protection of core liberties promised to us in the Florida and United States Constitutions.

Governor DeSantis, you have led us into this dark night of censorship. But you can also lead us out. We call on you today, and all of Florida’s leadership, to stop these tactics of suppression and instead provide the critical resources necessary to truly protect parents’ choice in education and ensure our communities flourish with successful, accessible, inclusive, high-quality public schools.

Discrimination and erasure must not be Florida’s future. Public schools are and must remain a public good. They must be a shining example of our democratic values. We ask that you join us in partnership and specifically ask that you:

- Encourage the Florida Legislature to take concrete steps in the 2025 legislative session to roll back harmful bills such as HB 1 (2021), HB7 (2022), HB 1557 (2022), HB 1467 (2022), HB 1069 (2023), SB 266 (2023), and HB 1291 (2024) and pass policies to reduce the harms caused by these censorial bills;
- Direct Education Commissioner Manny Diaz, Jr. to revise the state guidance to educators, administrators, and district leaders to ensure that books are not removed from schools and libraries for an unlimited amount of time without consideration of their literary and educational value;
- Provide the much needed categorical funding to ensure every classroom and school library has a professionally maintained, engaging, and representative library collection, especially in K-5; and
- Host a town hall for Floridians to discuss these issues and for you to hear from us directly about why we desperately need a change of course away from discriminatory policies and law.

We believe in protecting the freedoms of every American. We believe in the importance for students to have the freedom to read and to learn. We believe in the principles of academic freedom to ensure our educators have the latitude to lead robust classroom debate. We believe that we are stronger when all our voices and perspectives are heard and celebrated.

And so we say today in one unified voice, Florida will be the example of citizenry reclaiming their democracy, protecting their constitutional liberties, and supporting each other in the long struggle for equality. We hope you will join us.

Signed,

American Civil Liberties Union of Florida
Audubon Park Covenant Church
Books & Books
Central Floridians for Social Equality
Citizens for Truth and Justice in Education
Democratic Public Education Caucus of Florida
Educational Solutions and Resources, LLC
FAME
Families Against Banning Books
Florida Freedom to Read Project
Jane Addams Peace Association
League of Women Voters of the Saint Petersburg Area
Miami Freedom Project
Moms for Libros
NAACP Florida State Conference
Palm Harbor Library
Parents for Books
Pastors for Florida's Children
PEN America
PRISM FL, Inc
Space Coast Progressive Alliance
The Purple Group
Together for Hope
United Teachers of Dade
White Rose Books & More
Youth Action Fund
Zen & the Arts
Katherine B, Coral Gables
Laurel R, Ormond Beach
Cassidy D, Miami
Kathryn M, Lake Worth
Candice A, Saint Petersburg
Helena R, Miami
Suzanne W, Altamonte Springs
Isabella L, Pembroke Pines
Diana P, Riverview
Shawn W, Gulf Breeze
Katie M, Orange City
Jessica W, Leesburg
Sophia B, Miami
Isabella D, Naples
Evan F, Gotha
Amy R, Satellite Beach
Paul R, Satellite Beach
Nicole B, Winter Park
Christine C, DeLand
Jennifer D, Homestead
Alana N, Apopka
Tania G, Kissimmee
Van G, Miami
Eimear R, Orlando
Karen L, Boca Raton
Sheila Z, Ormond Beach
Madeline B, Tallahassee
Avion G, Boynton Beach
Tamara V, Groveland
Cecilia C, Dania Beach
Chayna H, Miami
Myles S, Mascotte
Dani S, Orlando
Brette G, Orlando
Marjie F, Vero Beach
Anne T, Saint Johns
Amy P, Naples
Mara S, Sebastian
Karla M, Miami
Carmen P, Miami
Frances C, Miami
Ana Sofia P, Miami
Arlene J, Vero Beach
Aaryn F, Orange Park
Larry Z, Ormond Beach
Kelly K, Palm Bay
Anne H, Destin
Victoria D, Hobe Sound
Joisha M, Newberry
Karolyn B, Tallahassee
Susan J, Saint Augustine
Pablo S, Miami
LS, Miami
Miranda S, Miami
Emily L, Tallahassee
Jennie F, New Smyrna Beach
Page C
Polly W, De Leon Springs
Nadine H, Saint Augustine
Mitchell K, Coral Gables
Mary C, Palm Coast
Coleen S, Ormond Beach
Carolyn T, Orange City
Anya S, Miami Beach
Kristin M, Naples
Robin W, Sanford
Mary D, Vero Beach
Amber S, Tallahassee
Mark M, Miami
Jessica E, Miami
Cristina N, Coral Gables
Ed B, Coral Gables
Bonnie P, Daytona Beach
Lyana R, Miami
Tom H, Miami Beach
Cary W, Tallahassee
Leah R, Tallahassee
Rebecca B, Tarpon Springs
Connie W, Vero Beach
Hope L, Fort Lauderdale
Laura J, Jacksonville
Vincent L, Delray Beach
Ann D, Vero Beach
Viviana F, Key Biscayne
Willa H, West Palm Beach
Ivette V, Stuart
Patricia A, Miami
Catie S, Key Biscayne
Alix R, Fort Lauderdale
Carmen L, Miami
Gaël L, Miami Beach
Julie J, Vero Beach
Polly D, Navarre
Riley G
Joan G, Miami
Kimberly D, Satellite Beach
Rebecca W, Miami Beach
Joanna W, Seffner
Maryann P, Belleair Beach
Cecilia W, Miami
Crystal B, Jacksonville
Kathryn M, Lake Worth
Maria M, Miami
Natalia D, Miami
Tile A, Miami
Caitlin J, Miami
Amie D, Miami
Marly S, Vero Beach
Bryan H, Miami
Dana S, Miami
Gail C, Myakka City
Valentina M, Hialeah
Ellie G, Miami
Susan G, Plantation
Tara S, Coventry
Richard G, Fort Lauderdale
Leslie S, Clermont
Sabrina J, Hallandale Beach
Nancy W, East Palatka
Mary Ann P
Jennifer T, Zephyrhills
Juan B, Hollywood
Chloe H, Gainesville
Brandy H, Longwood
Monique C, Gainesville
Matthew L, Tampa
Sharon H, Bradenton
Luisa S, Miami
Caryn P, Coral Gables
Carolina C, Miami
Aymarah R, Miami
Silvia M, Doral
Angela M, Miami
Vanessa N, Miami
Eden R, Pensacola
Kellie C, South Easton
Beverly C, Spring Hill
María L, Coral Gables
Aidil O, Miami
Kristin M, Gainesville
Gloria L, North Miami Beach
Sharon P, Orlando
Valerie L, Bradenton
Karin D, Miami Beach
Silvana R, Miami
Liz S, Miami
Susan G, Miami
Maxime D, Miami
Paula S, Tallahassee
Amy M, Miami
MaryBeth E, Winter Haven
Jennifer R, Miami
Maria T, Key Biscayne
Gina S, Miami
Thomas R, Bradenton
Frances A, Miami
Andrea P, Orlando
Jessica C, Casselberry
Aimee G, Miami
Domonique M, Panama City Beach
Heather G, Tallahassee
Jeremy G, Melbourne
Nadja S, Miami
Tracy D, Miami
Beverly R, Stuart
Trisha L, Lutz
Gina D, Satellite Beach
Michele D, Miami
Elizabeth A, Palm Bay
Neelah G
Christina B, Key Biscayne
Shawndra W, Miami
Vivian B, Miami
Teresa T, Fayetteville
Kelly L, DeLand
Karn J, Sun City Center
Cheryl W, Orlando
Vicki G, Miami
Cynthia J
Diana C, Sanford
Tracey D, Ocoee
Khushboo P
Gisnette R, Hialeah
Noosha M
David D, Coconut Creek
Barb N, Fort Myers Beach
Cathleen D, Palmetto
Hedieh S, Miami
Cherie H, Wesley Chapel
Margaret R, Coral Springs
Deborah D, Ocala
Jorge P, Miami
Salvatore V, Altamonte Springs
Nicole C
William J, Sarasota
Marlene W, Sarasota
Michelle G, Saint Petersburg
Suzy B, Loxahatchee
Elizabeth K, Jacksonville
Judi D, Saint Cloud
Barbara M, Palm Harbor
Cathy D, Cape Coral
Chris S, DeLand
Margaret D, DeLand
Elizabeth W, Tampa
Kris S, Ormond Beach
Andrea F, Tampa
Barbara S, Jupiter
Kristen P, Orlando
Barbara M, Tarpon Springs
Debbie P, Port Orange
Jo Ann L
Sarah S, Miami
John C, Naples
BJ S, Boca Raton
Carrie F, Melbourne
Jennifer A
Marica S, Cape Coral
James M, West Palm Beach
Patricia S, Delray Beach
Timothy L, Fort Lauderdale
Sylvia W, West Palm Beach
Kristine S, Melbourne
Marie M, Bradenton
Jan M
Kristin M, Naples
Mic E, Tampa
James Z, Flagler Beach
Allen H, Ocala
Richard F, Sarasota
Sarah R, Casselberry
Lauren J, Winter Springs
Nanette C, Sarasota
Mary I, Miami
Nancy G, Miami
Lenore M, Saint Petersburg
Peggy H, Gainesville
Heidi N, Port Saint Lucie
Maria M, Fort Lauderdale
Kathleen G, Pensacola
Celia K, Miami
Henry E, Tamarac
Maria T, Key Biscayne
Rosemary C, Tallahassee
Mike L, Pensacola
Glen V, New Port Richey
Deborah M, Land O Lakes
Ira C, Gainesville
Tanya C, Chuluota
Pamela M, Melbourne
Arlene L, West Palm Beach
Barbara G, Stuart
Jodelle M, Orange Park
Megan T, Bonita Springs
Stacy V, Lake Mary
Debi M, Miami
Michael R, Tallahassee
Sara L, Pensacola
Nancy C, Naples
Debra C, Saint Petersburg
Linda R, Jacksonville
Maureen K, Seminole
Janet H, Naples
Patricia S, Lakeland
Andrew F, Saint Petersburg
Patricia P, Naples
Marc R, Temple Terrace
Kimberley T, Jacksonville
Amy V, Orlando
Nicole K, Weeki Wachee
Cheryl G, Miami Shores
Robertaw, Ocala
Adrienne D, Miami
April V, Jacksonville
Elizabeth D, Lutz
Cheryl T, Venice
Norma N, Sanford
Aileen S, Miami
Amy A
Jan D, Key Biscayne
Sherrie R, Brooksville
Teri D, Orlando
Carol L, Key Biscayne
Elizabeth M, Bonita Springs
Grace G, Nokomis
Teresa M, Gainesville
Tyler S, Venice
Melody M, Tampa
Nancy A
Ximena V, North Miami Beach
Carol J, Tampa
Jennifer W, Tampa
Cristina V, Key Biscayne
Bev R, Stuart
Rebecca G, Sun City Center
Sharon S
D'Spencer L, Port Saint Lucie
Ann P, Winter Park
Kayla S, Crestview
Ben B, Thonotosassa
Elizabeth B, Jupiter
William W, Lutz
Anne C, Saint Pete Beach
Brent P, Leesburg
Craig C, Saint Petersburg
Leslie S, Naples
Abe L, Bonita Springs
Susan G, Naples
Bennie W, Saint Petersburg
Jessica A, Miami
Kerry W, Miami
Kathleen M, Saint Petersburg
Crystal M, Pensacola
Ellen W, Gulf Breeze
Marisa S, Tarpon Springs
Diana M, Tarpon Springs
Jan K
Steve N, Boynton Beach
Kenneth M, Hastings
Stephanie F, Coral Springs
Barbara T, Miami
Ashley P, Miami
John J
Bonnie P, Daytona Beach
Nancy W, Margate
Rebekah B, Riverview
Diana D, Valrico
Don E, Naples
Trenece R
Rob B, Palm Bay
Anne M, West Palm Beach
Sarah O, Fort Lauderdale
Blake R
Anita O, Lecanto
Kristine S, Gulfport
Erin K
Carmen L, Miami
Michelle A, Hollywood
Kathy D, Palm Beach
Andrea W, Eustis
Carol G, West Palm Beach
Virginia A, Miami
Frances G, Bradenton
Sharon A, Boca Raton
Ginny S, Saint Cloud
Amber B, Lake City
Taryn R
Toni B, Daytona Beach
Maria N, Homestead
Elizabeth W, Stuart
Africa, F
Ansley S, Cantonment
Liz E, Saint Augustine
Mary S, North Fort Myers
A.L. S, Miami Beach
Connie M, Crescent City
Brandi W, Marco Island
Melissa B, Lauderhill
Russ Z, Downers Grove
Larry B, Lutz
Melinda W, Sanford
Rosalie H, Gainesville
Anne G, Gulfport
Valerie B, New Port Richey
Brian P, Wilton Manors
Isabelle L, Pembroke Pines
Ana R, Miami
Rebecca Q, Orlando
John B, Bronson
Diana C, Bradenton
Marcia I, Tampa
Willa H, West Palm Beach
Patricia H, Gainesville
Ellen H, Bradenton
L R, Saint Petersburg
Nancy F, Miami Shores
Jim L, Saint Petersburg
Richard A, Miami
Bill Z, Bonita Springs
Ruth S, Saint Petersburg
Carol C, Hobe Sound
Tricia F, Venice
Marian R, Winter Haven
Sasha C, Bradenton
Robert C, Lake Wales
Albertina M, Orange Park
Margaret L, Clearwater
Kellie B, Sarasota
Kayla K, Cocoa Beach
Frances P, Saint Augustine
Kathryn C, Bellview
Jessica M, Naples
Marie V, Lake Worth
Barbara I, Melbourne
Melissa V, Safety Harbor
Deborah K, Delray Beach
Andrea P, Orlando
Cindy M
Debbie P, Port Orange
Morgan K, Saint Petersburg
Kim A, Bradenton
David M, West Palm Beach
Lori M, Saint Cloud
Erin M, Winter Parks
Calvin J
Michael D, Venice
Heidi R, Delray Beach
Diane M, Defuniak Springs
Patricia B, Miami
Barbara B, Ponte Verda
Caroline M, Miami
Tracy D, North Port
Judith G, Hallandale Beach
Sandra S, Orange City
Lynn M, Rockledge
Michael A, Fort Myers
Suzanne H, Orlando
Marie M, Bradenton
Karen W, Melbourne
Suzanne J, Vero Beach
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Carol R, Daytona Beach
Sandra R, Delray Beach
Judy B, Fort Myers
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Frances W, Tampa
Pamela C, Ormond Beach
Cindy R, Pinellas Park
Cameron D
Jacqueline A
Eric S, Lehigh Acres
Tayna E, Tallahassee
Gael L, Miami Beach
Erin D, Kissimmee
Crystal E, Miami
Sophie P, Miami
Katherine W, Miami
Cortney C, Miami
Michele D, Miami
Victoria S, Palm City
Francisca P, Miami
Julie G, Sanford
Lisa T, Fort Pierce
Megan C, Tallahassee
Brenda P, Lutz
and 112 anonymous signatories.

CC: Commissioner Manny Diaz, Jr.
Florida Board of Governors
Florida College Board
Senate President Kathleen Passidomo
Representative Paul Renner, Speaker of the House