**DATE**

**YOUR ADDRESS**

**SCHOOLNAME** Board of Education

**SCHOOL ADDRESS**

Dear School Board Members,

I am writing to you as a **PARENT/TEACHER/COMMUNITY MEMBER** concerned about the dramatic increase in book bans locally and across the country. As a fierce proponent of free speech, I am alarmed by this trend and urge you to stand against it. While there are many reasons they take place, book bans are never the answer.

It is understandable for parents to want some oversight regarding what their children read, especially at a young age. However, parents do not have the right to restrict what books are available to other children. Many of the books we see being banned, including Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*, are classics for a reason; these vital stories help children better understand the world and their place in it. Perhaps more importantly, books are a window into other lived experiences and can encourage empathy and social-emotional development. Finally, reading teaches students how to think for themselves. These are all qualities we should want for our children, and we must not deprive them of the opportunity to learn.

This issue is especially important to me as a Jew. It was Heinrich Heine who wrote in 1822, “Where they burn books, they will, in the end, burn human beings, too.” Banning books on the Holocaust, for example, may come from a well-intentioned desire to shield children from the horrors of the world, but the children who perished in the Holocaust were not given that opportunity. Students must learn the dangers of hatred, bigotry, and violence. Antisemitism is not gone, nor are the prejudices against any number of marginalized groups. Teaching children history—all of history, the good, bad, and ugly—is necessary to prepare them for the world. We are doing them a disservice otherwise.

Once more, I urge you to denounce book bans **and reverse the bans against the following books at SCHOOLNAME (if applicable):**

* **LIST BOOKS**
* ***To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee**

I look forward to your response. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**YOUR FULL NAME**

**TITLE/INSTITUTION (if applicable)**