The New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) and the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL) are pleased that the New Jersey Assembly Education Committee voted to approve legislative bill A3446 on Thursday, June 7. This bill, the Freedom to Read Act, ensures that every New Jersey resident continues to enjoy the freedom to read for education and entertainment. This freedom is supported by the Bill of Rights, decades of precedent, and the robust libraries that serve K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and New Jersey communities. NJLA and NJASL are thankful to the Assembly Education Committee members for their attention during hours of public testimony, and are especially grateful to the committee members who voted to move the bill forward. The bill is sponsored by Assemblywoman Mitchelle Drulis, Assemblywoman Shavonda E. Sumter, and Assemblyman Herb Conaway. Thanks, too, to Assemblywoman Drulis (D-Hunterdon) and her staff, who attended the committee meeting to hear public testimony.

NJLA and NJASL are grateful to the organizations that support the bill, which includes EveryLibrary, ACLU NJ, Garden State Equality, New Jersey Education Association, the Sikh Coalition, SweepNJ, New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, New Jersey Association of School Administrators, Garden State Coalition of Schools, New Jersey School Boards Association, and NJ League of Women Voters. Thanks, too, to the dozens of individual community members, parents, and children who testified on behalf of the bill.

NJLA and NJASL hope that A3446 and its companion bill, S2421, continue to move quickly through the legislative process. They look forward to working with legislators to promote the value and professionalism of New Jersey libraries and librarians.

The New Jersey Library Association advocates for the advancement of library services for the residents of New Jersey and provides continuing education and networking opportunities for library staff members. Additionally, it supports the principles of intellectual freedom and promotes access to library materials for all.

The New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL) is the only statewide organization for school librarians in New Jersey. NJASL believes that every student in every New Jersey school deserves to be taught by a state certified full-time School Library Media Specialist supported by a resource-rich school library program. School librarians are essential partners in curriculum delivery and college and career readiness. They are leaders in the integration of technology, information and digital literacies, and professional development for school staff.