

Julie Altemose
65 Gardiner Close
Middlebury, VT 05753

January 27, 2020

Philip Baruth
Senate Committee on Education
Vermont State House
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

Dear Philip Baruth and Members of the Senate Education Committee:

I am writing this letter to show my support for the bill S.281, which would create a status of libraries report. As an elementary school librarian, I believe that libraries play an integral part in the lives of all citizens in our state. I believe that it is vital that libraries continue to receive resources and attention so that they can continue to broaden the services they provide to all patrons.

I am fortunate to work and live in Middlebury and because my school library and the town library collaborate so frequently, and thus the services we provide patrons are magnified! We work together to provide programming that meets the needs of the children in our town and their families. We collaborate to co-host author visits, family book clubs, promote reading initiatives, and celebrate Everybody Wins (a reading mentor program). We are fortunate to have wonderful collaboration in so many ways!

The teachers and students in our school are able to access resources within our school and also materials available through our town library. Our students are able to access audiobooks and ebooks through the ListenUp Vermont. For research, they have access to the Vermont Online Library database. The overall collection available to students increases greatly because we have access to the municipal library and the Vermont Department of Libraries as well. My mission as a school librarian is to make sure that everyone has access to the resources they need in order to find the information they are seeking and to enjoy literature as a lifelong activity.

Media and information literacy skills are essential and all children should develop and practice these skills in school. It is important that schools have certified librarians to help teachers provide this education. It's also vital that we help students learn how to find and use the information they need, to succeed now and in their future life and work. Students must learn

how to analyze diverse sources of information, think critically, explore new ideas, and make decisions.

This bill will include a group study that will look at staffing, resources, collection, programming, facilities, and technology. All of these aspects are critical when analyzing the importance and necessity of libraries. In some towns, resources are more plentiful and accessible than others. It is important that at the state level we consider how to share resources and meet the needs of all citizens. I hope that the bill is able to move forward and that the state of Vermont continues to provide resources for all libraries- both municipal and educational! Thank you for your consideration and support of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie Altemose".

Julie Altemose
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