

Why does it seem the Republican leadership in Des Moines is afraid of an educated electorate? When our state's forefathers wrote our constitution, they enshrined education as a prominent article within that document. Education, to them was a great equalizer and provided for an educated electorate who could think for themselves, act for themselves, and make decisions for themselves.

As an educator, I find this bill to be onerous on both our schools and our public libraries. For years, I have encouraged students to utilize our public libraries as a source of information, to find books to both learn further about topics being taught in my classes, as well as to grow their own understanding of the world in which they live. As a state with several great public libraries, this bill does nothing to further community partnerships, but rather, drives a wedge of division between our schools and our libraries, creating an incomplete learning situation that will lead to further gaps in education, and a further drop in our state's educational ranking nationally.

There was a time when Republicans were champions for education. If Iowa is to truly be a "land to flourish," we need to return to having leaders who are willing to make the tough decisions to back our public educators who, by and large, are not in the business of "indoctrinating" students, but rather, are in the business of educating and teaching students about a changing, world where they will be exposed to things they may, or may not agree with. As educators, it is our job to teach students how to think and reason through those situations and not to react to every whim of society, but to use logic and critical thinking skills to come to an educated conclusion about why they believe what they believe.