

# Comment Report

SSB 3168

A bill for an act relating to city libraries, including library directors and library moneys.

Subcommittee Members: Green-CH, Klimesh, Weiner

Date: 02/12/2024

Time: 10:30 AM

Location: Room 315

**Name:** Jenn Delperdang

**Comment:** I STRONGLY OPPOSE SSB 3168, for even more reasons than I opposed SSB 3131. Do the lawmakers advancing this bill even USE their public libraries? Are they LISTENING to the ways that Libraries empower and enrich their communities? Do they go and OBSERVE the impact that Libraries have for individuals in their communities? Do they know that for many of the REGISTERED VOTERS in their districts that Libraries are vital to their quality of life? This bill will destroy the freedoms to access information that the public has a right to. Shifting political whims of City government should not have oversight of library policy or collection development. "All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for the protection, security, and benefit of the people" This bill has no merit, and is NOT for the benefit of the people.

**Name:** Jeff Collins

**Comment:** Please don't politicize libraries. This legislation is unnecessary and only hurts Iowans.

**Name:** Martha McClurg

**Comment:** As a frequent library patron and library volunteer, I vehemently oppose SSB 3168. Taking control away from both the library board and also voters is concerning as it removes safeguards to protect personal liberties and personal freedoms. Leaving library spending up to city leaders without any voter input is a recipe for abuse and misuse of funds, as is taking away the power of library boards who best know their library and it's patrons, staff, and needs to appoint library directors. Please table SSB 3168 and let Iowa libraries continue to serve their communities with compassion, knowledge, and excellence.

**Name:** Emily Akker

**Comment:** Words cannot expressed how thoroughly disappointed I am that there is yet ANOTHER bill that could limit the impact of Iowa libraries for Iowa citizens. I believe that this bill would give city councils unchecked power to hire library directors and use money in a way that serves partisan political agendas rather than in a way that protects 1st amendment rights and serves all people within a community. I deeply value my local library and I want to have access to nonpartisan free public libraries for many years to come. This bill needs to be stopped and I want Iowa lawmakers to focus on real issues, not on setting limits on libraries that are running just fine the way that they are.

**Name:** Dara Schmidt

**Comment:** There is no logical or reasonable explanation for this legislation. Our Iowa library boards have done tremendous dedicated work. We should be thanking them for their service, not throwing our solid system away for spite. Stop this now.

**Name:** Kathryn Coulter

**Comment:** I am opposed to all these bills that politicize our library personnel selection. Another blatant attempt to take over our freedom of thought.

**Name:** Anna Phelps

**Comment:** I am a Waukee library trustee. I appreciate the subcommittee dropping SSB3131. I'd like to understand the rationale for the revised bill that could alter the governance for libraries without city residents voting on the change. Volunteer citizens currently perform the roles noted in the revised bill. These trustees volunteer their time to make sure that their local library runs well, follows complex laws, passes accreditation (helps with federal and state funding) and meets the needs of the community. I'm not understanding why there is a proposal to shift these duties to city council. This would require city staff to take on additional duties with no additional resources. In my view, if this is something that cities want they should have a referendum and vote on it. Iowa local libraries run very well and I don't understand why we would change what's been a very effective and efficient governance process. Furthermore, I see no reason for state government to get involved in what should be a local city matter. I would really like to understand the rationale in proposing this revised bill. I respectfully request that this bill not move forward.

**Name:** Carmen Golay

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. This offers no benefit to Iowans and is actually an unfunded mandate for cities. The similar bill 3131 was also strongly opposed by the public via comments and testimony. Having city councils in charge of libraries is a very bad idea for a multitude of reasons including the fact that rural Iowans can't vote for the city council members who would then decide how their libraries are run. Please stop these bills that are averse to our public libraries.

**Name:** Jade Hart

**Comment:** This legislation is unnecessary and would be detrimental to public libraries. City councils rely on the library board members THEY APPOINT to lead in hiring the director and other decision making in an informed, objective, and NONPARTISAN way. I doubt most city councils would welcome adding the work of the board to their responsibilities. Also, the library budget is ultimately approved by the city council so that is not the issue. Leave the libraries alone! They work incredibly well as they are.

**Name:** John Kenyon

**Comment:** Please vote NO on this bill. The very reason this bill has been proposed is the same reason why it should be defeated: our state's libraries should not be victims to the political whims of a particular movement. Cities already have mechanisms in place through appointments to ensure that the people on library boards represent the needs of the community, and these people should be allowed to do what is best for the community as it relates to library services and collections without worrying about politics. Libraries are the one place where people can go to gather, to learn, and to be entertained without politics getting in the way. People are free to completely avoid materials they find objectionable, to not attend events they don't agree with or, at the same time, to suggest materials they want to see or hold events they want to attend. This is a remedy for a problem that does not exist. I would strongly recommend voting NO.

**Name:** Candice Smith

**Comment:** Please don't politicize public libraries. As a public library employee of over 20 years, I can tell you that we are here to serve everyone; we don't let our own opinions affect what we provide to our communities. In fact, I would say that most of us in the public library world go out of our way to make our actions and services equitable and not reflective of our own feelings if there is conflict there. Please don't put public libraries in the hands of people who aren't willing to do the same. Doing so would

only be hurting the communities that libraries serve.

**Name:** Joanne Drinkall

**Comment:** I strongly oppose bill SSB 3168. There is no need to change the existing oversight of local libraries and give control to political city councils.

**Name:** Anne Wilmoth

**Comment:** Please do not advance SSB 3168. As you have already heard in response to other similar bills from librarians, library workers, library directors, members of Library Boards of Trustees, members of City Councils, and others, Library leadership and Library Boards of Trustees ALREADY WORK CLOSELY with their respective City Councils on budgets and personnel. The process is ALREADY TRANSPARENT to City government and City government ALREADY HAS input into and oversight of the budget and hiring processes. I implore you to DO SOME EXTENSIVE RESEARCH on library operations and funding structures around the state of Iowa before ramming through these bills. I understand your ultimate goal is to create mechanisms through which elected politicians can have greater control over the books on library shelves. Please also reflect on how that aligns with your professed values of local control, smaller government, and greater efficiency for taxpayers.

**Name:** David Thompson

**Comment:** Please do not advance SSB 3168. This is an unnecessary and harmful attempt to overregulate public libraries and take power away from citizen library users and the citizens who serve on Library Boards.

**Name:** Carol Gilbertson

**Comment:** Please defeat this bill before even sending it out of committee. As a lifetime teacher of literature, I believe deeply in the power of books to deepen understanding and help individuals mature psychologically, as well as to inform citizens crucial in a democracy. Please leave library policies and governance in the hands of book experts and booklovers (library boards and librarians) rather than in the hands of city governments.

**Name:** Denise Bachelder

**Comment:** This would be detrimental to the neutrality of public libraries and would strip away the policies and ethics libraries have worked so hard to maintain. Libraries need to remain neutral and free from political influence. Libraries are for everyone!

**Name:** Benjamin Nichols

**Comment:** I am writing to oppose SSB 3168 in regards to Public Library governance and financial oversight. There is no need or practical reason to further this additional legislation. I respectfully ask that this bill not be advanced, now or ever.

**Name:** Sarah Wicks

**Comment:** Please do not politicize our libraries. It is important for voters to be able to have a voice on whether to approve changes like library governance. We do not need the legislator making unilateral decisions for our communities. Library boards are intimately and uniquely knowledgeable about what it takes to serve as a library director and how to effectively manage local libraries. Our city leaders are already stretched thin and without all the resources they need, no one benefits from bills like this. Our local library is one of the best assets of our community, please focus on the real issues affecting Iowans, no one is asking for this kind of unilateral decision making and burdensome change and oversight.

**Name:** Eric Ellingsen

**Comment:** There is no logical or reasonable explanation for this legislation. Our Iowa library

boards have done tremendous dedicated work. We should be thanking them for their service, not throwing our solid system away for spite. Stop this now.

**Name:** lynne sootheran

**Comment:** Please do not mess with how our library operates. I see no problem with how Decorah library functions now. There seems to be an unnecessary power grabs going on in the state of Iowa and these needs to stop. Thanks Lynne

**Name:** Pam Torresdal

**Comment:** I vehemently oppose SSB3168. Library Boards, who have significant knowledge and expertise regarding the skill set needed to be a top notch library director, should be responsible for the hiring process of a director, not a city council with no special expertise in this area and many other responsibilities. And the hiring process for a public library director should not be influenced by the partisan politics that may well be present within a city council. It appears this bill would also allow city councils to "utilize library tax moneys" without the approval of voters, thereby removing the voice of voters in such decisions. Preserving the autonomy and independence of public libraries and library boards is critical in this area of political partisanship.

**Name:** Barbara and Jim Dale

**Comment:** Here in Winneshiek County we are enormously proud of our libraries and rely on them for the information and pleasure we seek. We fail to understand how having city councils make the decisions trained library staff have always done effectively would improve their service. Placing that kind of micromanagement on the councils would seem to increase their work load to what end? Is this an effort by folks who think they should be able to censor what we read? If so, that effort has always limited people's freedom and demonstrated lack of trust in citizens' judgment. Please do not vote for a bill to transfer library decisions to city councils.

**Name:** Teri Mangskau

**Comment:** Politics do not belong in our schools or libraries! Leave our public essentials alone. Iowa politicians need to stop saying there for small government yet continue to take away the rights for our schools and public entities to make decisions for themselves based on community needs!!!

**Name:** Emma Burnett

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill. Libraries are excellent resources for the communities they serve and should not be restricted or politicized.

**Name:** Nancy Gates

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB3168. Public libraries are for the public, and all residents should have a voice. Please do not politicize public libraries; these proposed bills do not benefit Iowans. Please leave the oversight of libraries to the book experts (librarians) and their allies (the library board).

**Name:** Carol Hemesath

**Comment:** I am very, very opposed to the newest bill that comes from this repressive Iowa GOP, SSB 3168. Again, as in almost every bill that has been brought forth, this bill is overreach and attempts to control our local lives at a state level. Our local libraries did not ASK for this bill. It is not needed. Our representatives in Iowa do not really listen to us, they answer to the power brokers and money people. Local Iowans do not want this. The majority does not have a say, but the loud minority does. I am opposed to this bill. Being an Iowan gets harder each day.

**Name:** Kristin Erickson

**Comment:** I find it very troubling that your making a problem. Why? Our library is great just the way it is. What is next? Banning books? Burning books? Drop this legislation please.

**Name:** Anne Mangano

**Comment:** Semiautonomous library boards do not mean that library boards do not have relationships with their respective city/county governments. They have to go through the same budgetary process and purchasing rules as other city departments. They follow the same HR rules and guidelines. Where we differ is that the library board provides a buffer so the city council does not have to get in the weeds of collection development or what group can use what meeting room. This is a decades long standing rule that works really well if you researched how libraries work. Libraries are obviously political with books that run the political spectrum. Lets not make collection decisions political. What happens to conservative ideas in communities with liberal councils? Will the books in the library be election talking points for council members? Perhaps that is your design. The voters of Pella decided they did not want this to happen in their community and you are nullifying their vote. If this bill is because one city is upset with their library (which I think it is), why does the entire state of Iowa have to heed? That city should go to their voters and use the tools that state law already provides. Voters have the power to make this change. Allow Iowans to keep their rights to run their own communities.

**Name:** Cynthia Monroe

**Comment:** Leave my library and its organization alone. Quit trying to create a Nazilike state.

**Name:** Paul Wermers

**Comment:** Con for SSB3168, please vote no

**Name:** Kathy Buzza

**Comment:** I am against SSB 3168, as the bill would allow city councils to utilize library tax moneys without needing voters approval. It would also allow city councils to oversee and change the hiring practice for library directors. Currently that process is overseen and managed by local library boards, who have the knowledge and expertise about what it takes to serve as a library director. Please remember that library board members are currently appointed by the mayor and approved by the city council. Have the city councils in Iowa asked for this bill, or is this bill, as well as HSB 678, an effort by a small group of legislators wanting to promote a conservative agenda? Please do not allow this bill to leave committee.

**Name:** Katie Johnson

**Comment:** I am very opposed to bill SSB3168. There is no need to change the existing oversight of local libraries and give control to political city councils. No thank you.

**Name:** Hayley Jackson

**Comment:** Please do not move this bill forward. It does not offer anything that improves the public's access to or use of the public library. Rather, it takes away the direct voice of voters in how library funds are handled, overburdens city administrators with additional oversight that is not necessary (nor been requested by local libraries), and removes any library management expertise held by library boards and library staff in hiring library directors. The city councils already have a role in approving library board members they are not shut out of the process for choosing library leadership by any stretch. Please understand that local library boards work closely with local government and their communities to understand their needs. Please understand that this bill ultimately reduces a community's own control over their library, as it takes away their DIRECT voice. Please understand that people who have dedicated their careers to serving their communities by running libraries are not in support of this and this bill disregards their decades of experience for no tangible benefit beyond giving cities an additional pot of discretionary spending.

**Name:** Rebekah Hosford

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill. Taking away power from Library Boards invites politics into the library. Let's not do that.

**Name:** Laura Thompson

**Comment:** I strongly urge you to vote NO on this bill. Public libraries are vital to our communities and provide numerous resources that go far beyond checking out books. They are a place where everyone has free access to information even if some individuals would prefer such information to be censored. It is incredibly important that libraries retain their autonomy from political influence. If public libraries become just another branch of city hall, and if the city council has the ability to pick and choose the programs, the materials available, the director, and the board members at their will and whim, we will have begun a descent down a slippery slope. Having worked at a public library myself for over six years, I can assure you that providing free access to information to everyone is beyond necessary it is one of the most American things we can do. However, if we allow our libraries to instead become places of political sway and censorship, then we have failed. This bill cannot be allowed to go forward.

**Name:** Carol Prescott

**Comment:** I am a Trustee of a small town Iowa library. All five trustees on the library board are unpaid volunteers. Our library is a community hub. We spend hours planning and fund raising to keep programming relevant to community needs. We write grants for additional funding for upkeep, such as computers and technology. In 2023 we hosted adult crafts, a Summer reading program for children, afternoon crafts and games for children, a bike parade, a time capsule opening, a zoo animals presentation, trunk or treat, and a block party complete with a band, vendors, fire truck and firemen, and police cars with officers, all donated or paid for, by our annual fundraiser. Our library director wrote and received a grant for a makers space stem activity center and a grant to pay for expenses to attend the National Librarians Convention. The City handles all library monies. The Library submits bills to be paid. The Mayor appoints the Library Board Trustees. The Library Board and Director submit an annual budget to the City for approval. The balances and checks are in place. Please do not discourage the hardworking library directors and library board trustees by passing this unneeded bill. Please kill bill 3168 in committee. Dont waste time fixing something that isnt broken. Thank you.

**Name:** Jessica Musil

**Comment:** The proposed legislation is detrimental to libraries! Please listen to library professionals, trustees, City leadership, and City Councils. They have all being say NO to similar proposed bills for good reasons. The current system works and maintains a library system for ALL. This legislation would allow city and lawmakers to retaliate against libraries based on personal beliefs. Do not politicize our libraries. Stop trying to push forward slightly different bills that work toward libraries' destruction.

**Name:** Alexandra Reiling

**Comment:** Please vote no on this bill. It is a threat to the freedom of information and entirely counter to democracy and local control. Please do not politicize libraries.

**Name:** Emma Stoffer

**Comment:** Any bill that seeks to disenfranchise Iowa citizens is troubling, but it is especially disturbing to see state leaders attempt to remove voting power from Iowa citizens when it concerns local issues. The very act of proposing a bill that circumvents the call for a referendum demonstrates the fear state leaders have of public voice and by extension, the public library, an institution that strives to help Iowans of all backgrounds find their voices and tell their stories. Furthermore, the absence of the counties in these conversations is bemusing. Elected county leaders have a say over their public libraries much like those of the city. Why are they excluded from these

bills? Public libraries have thrived in Iowa for over a century. They have not needed this level of interference in the past, nor do they need it now. It begs the question, why do our state leaders feel the sudden urge to change this? What is it about our libraries that frightens them so intensely that they are determined to destroy librarianship as it exists currently? I do not support SSB 3168. Public Libraries must remain in the power of the public, not at the mercy of malevolent political machinations.

**Name:** Cindy Wedeking

**Comment:** Keep libraries local!

**Name:** Christine Schnell

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168 The bill politicizes Libraries and would hurt the impact the libraries have on the people they serve. They are fine as they are now leave them alone. Christine Schnell

**Name:** Sarah Rosenblum

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill. Please name the city administrators that are in favor of this bill since you claim to have many in favor of it. Why is keep keep secret?

**Name:** Patricia Sheller

**Comment:** Leave off politically punishing libraries. They provide good information and other valuable services to all Iowans.

**Name:** Julie Iverson

**Comment:** Please reconsider the changes for Library's, Boards and citizens. What is happening to government that wants to take on more responsibility when they are struggling with their current demands.

**Name:** Alison Cocks

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. Leave public libraries alone. They are and mainstay of local communities and should not be interfered with by state government. Libraries need local control to meet the needs of patrons and to make sure freedom of speech is protected.

**Name:** Paul Melde

**Comment:** This overt attempt to politicize the management of public libraries should not be allowed to go forward. We all know this is a reaction to public libraries insistence on autonomy, and a blatant power grab to seize their independent funding and their independence. Iowa was always about thinking for oneself, and enabling personal growth a fundamental aspect of the mission of public libraries. Please do not let this bill go forward.

**Name:** Lori Carnes

**Comment:** As a frequent library patron and board member of my community's library, I ask that this bill be dropped. The system is not broken. This attacks the services that libraries provide. City councils have more than enough to deal with and may not have the passion and knowledge that is needed to provide services to their communities. Please stop this political attack on our libraries. Lori Carnes

**Name:** Jodi Maddy

**Comment:** Please don't advance this bill. Libraries are the only safe place for some people and they need it for many reasons.

**Name:** Jennifer Stumpff

**Comment:** I cannot stress enough how unwelcome, unnecessary, and harmful this bill is. It never

should have been introduced, much less passed from committee. I am vehemently opposed, for reasons others have well articulated.

**Name:** Kate Simmons

**Comment:** Please stop politicizing our public libraries. These are priceless public institutions that must serve our communities. Iowa has a proud library history let's keep them public. Let the people library.

**Name:** Rachel Henning

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. As a lifelong library patron and enthusiast I stand with libraries and applaud the fantastic work they do in our communities. There is no need or reason to change things. Vote "No" on this legislation.

**Name:** Morgan Manley

**Comment:** I cannot express how strongly I oppose this bill. It gives nothing to the people these representatives govern. This bill WILL cause libraries to close and people to lose access to services they need. I urge you to consider if this type of government control is truly going to benefit the communities you represent. I speak from experience that it will not.

**Name:** Melissa Heston

**Comment:** I am appalled that there would be ANY consideration of a bill putting PUBLIC libraries under the direct control of elected officials. Our public libraries are essential components of the public commons and the foundation of a literate and wellinformed populace. Elected officials will always lean toward serving their unique constituencies, rather the public good writ large. Censorship is already playing havoc with our libraries and public schools, despite the fact that the open examination and discussion of ideas is utterly foundational to both our democracy. We simply cannot have an informed electorate when censorship occurs. This smacks so much of the USSR in the Cold War that I can barely believe the effort is being led by Republicans. During the Cold War, we understood that the Soviet Union censored (and Russia continues to censor) ideas that government powers found threatening. We called that indoctrination. How ironic that the Iowa GOP is embracing the very ideas that their grandparents held in contempt. Kill this bill NOW!

**Name:** Nicole Rhodes

**Comment:** Stop it. Legislators are supposed to support their constituents. We have made our voices heard. I doubt any of you have walked into a library in decades. They are far beyond books. They provide so many public services and need an appropriate board to make decisions. This should not be left to city councils. They have their own purpose and have enough to do. READ and LISTEN.

**Name:** Nancy Halls

**Comment:** Some folks here are asking what the reason is for this bill what's the rationale? And that makes sense because Iowans send our elected representatives to the statehouse to solve problems, to address pressing needs, to make our communities safer, healthier places to work and live and grow and this bill doesn't even pretend to do any of those things. This bill is instead about taking things away: taking away local control of our libraries; taking away our libraries' autonomy; and, at its heart, this bill is about taking away Iowans' freedom to read. Like so many bills brought forward in the Iowa legislature in the last few years, this bill is modeled on (if not taken wordforword from) legislation created by, pushed by and, in the sorry cases where it becomes law, defended by groups outside Iowa. Groups like the Alliance Defending Freedom now there's an ironic misnomer! whose motivations have absolutely nothing to do with solving Iowa problems or promoting safer, healthier communities in our state. Making our public schools and our public libraries into political footballs does not serve Iowans' best interests. Iowans deserve representation in our state



government which is willing to put in the work to create grassroots legislation that actually addresses our needs, our issues, our problems. I am strongly opposed to this bill, and I will vote accordingly in every. single. election. up and down the ballot, from school boards to Terrace Hill.

**Name:** Marge Johnson

**Comment:** I strongly opposed thesr bills and highly request these bills are voted out. The library board understands how the library needs to be run and know the people on the board!

**Name:** Rachel Rugg

**Comment:** I strongly opposed SSB 3168. The public libraries in Iowa do not need to be changed. City councils in Iowa do not want to have the added burden of operating libraries. The library boards in this state do an excellent job of operating our public libraries.

**Name:** Amber Schulte

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill. Our library system, especially in Iowa is great and thriving. It does not need changed or different governance. Please do not pass this bill.

**Name:** Sherri Hutchcroft

**Comment:** I wish to express my disapproval and disgust with this bill. When was the last time any of you walked into your local library? I visit our lovely new facility regularly and am always amazed at the number of adults and kids there. This is one of the few places in most communities that are free for use and offering programming that benefits all ages of the community. I honestly dont know what has happened to our state we used to value education! You were all elected to represent your constituents and not be a rubber stamp for our Governor!

**Name:** Deborah Fink

**Comment:** This is a terrible bill, which I totally oppose. Libraries are the lifeblood of intelligent citizenship. Do not wrench them out of community control.

**Name:** Judy Kading

**Comment:** Making our public libraries into a political football is a very bad idea. Patrons of the public library don't need the legislators to tell them what they can read or not read. This is called censorship and that is where this legislation is going. The relationship between public library boards and city councils is all a part of local control, a time honored principle of Iowa. City councils owe it to their cities to provide library services and the best way to do that is through the appointed library boards. These library boards are responsible citizens who should not be interfered with by the proposed legislation. City councils owe it to their citizens to provide the budget of the libraries. There is no reason for a change to this responsibility. There is no need to change the wording in the Iowa Code from "shall" to "may." Also, it is ridiculous to think of the books in the library as the property of the city council. The responsibiity for the books and the ownership of the books is in the hands of the library board, which hires the librarian and staff. The city council does not have the time or the training to worry about the books in the library or the processes or administration of the library. This is the pervue of the library board working with the librarian and staff. The legislature doesn't really know much about the functioning of municipalities in this area apparently or it would not have ever proposed or taken seriously this legislation.

**Name:** Eric Jennings

**Comment:** We've been down this road before and I implore you to read through and consider the large number of comments on previous iterations of these bills (SSB 3131, HSB

678) regarding library boards, how monies are spent, and how director positions are hired. If there is a specific problem that you are trying to address with this bill please talk to librarians and their boards about how best to handle it rather than legislate that to all public libraries across the state for a system that has been working for decades. I urge you to vote no on moving this forward.

**Name:** Patricia Dumenil

**Comment:** I oppose this legislation.

**Name:** Brice Hughes

**Comment:** I am writing to express my opposition to SS3168, the bill taking control of libraries away from library board members. Censoring what books are available is the action of totalitarian governments. It is beneath the dignity of Iowa legislators. Do not punish libraries for supporting the freedom to read and for citizens to be well and fully educated.

**Name:** Robert Hopp

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168 most strongly. Leave our libraries alone.

**Name:** Danielle Jennings

**Comment:** I am absolutely opposed to SSB 3168. As a citizen who is a library patron I do not want to see more government interference on my local libraries. I believe there will be significantly more burdens on city counsels to make decisions on areas that they should not have to. Iowa used to have pride in empowering citizens and educating our youth and I feel that a bill like this erodes that pride and will sink us further into a politicized and polarized place.

**Name:** MaryLea Holcomb

**Comment:** I am so proud of how our Adel Public Library involves all children, teens and adults in so many ways. I greatly oppose SSB3168 because it would take away the ability of the staff to do what they do so well!Please stop this before it goes out of committee!!

**Name:** JOHN CARR

**Comment:** The voters in Pella already made the decision on how they wanted their library to be run. Apparently the Legislature doesn't want to listen to voters in Iowa. The proposed legislation is detrimental to libraries! Please listen to library professionals, trustees, City leadership, City Councils, and voters!

**Name:** Shawna Riggins

**Comment:** I oppose SSB3168. This proposed legislation threatens the nonpartisan nature of libraries that is essential to the fundamental values of these institutions. Libraries exist to support communities. Please do not threaten their efficacy and the essential support that they offer to Iowans.

**Name:** Beverly West

**Comment:** Im a frequent library user. The current system works. If its not broken, it doesnt need to be fixed. There are many issues in Iowa that are not working and need the legislature's time and energy. I oppose SSB 3168.

**Name:** Robin Kingrey

**Comment:** I support the current local control system created by city councils/mayors appointing library trustees to oversee library services. The system works to provide best practices to libraries by trustees trained and invested in their library and community. This system of checks and balances really works!

**Name:** Louise Kaufman

**Comment:** I strongly object to this proposed bill.

**Name:** Sandra` Hoeg

**Comment:** I strongly oppose Ssb3168. This bill doesn't even begin to make common sense. We have wonderful peopleserving in our libraries because they enjoy the work and are good at it. This bill begins to politicizelibrary budgets and workers. Why are you even considering doing this? Just for more control???

**Name:** Emy Gregg

**Comment:** I am strongly opposed to SSB 3168. Using libraries for political gain is wrong, no matter what your party affiliation is. Just remember, while you may get short term gain, the pendulum could swing in the opposite direction at any time. Library boards are meant to be neutral, city councils are elected positions and are often politicized positions. Politics have no place in Iowas libraries!

**Name:** Dustin Riggins

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168. This legislation is not in the best interest of libraries or Iowans. Current structures in place work. Keep Libraries local.

**Name:** Persephona Rivas

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168. It is not in the best interests of Iowans or our libraries.

**Name:** Michele Rudisill

**Comment:** I am opposed to SSB 3168. Our libraries provide so many essential services, and are doing a phenomenal job under the current system. If it isn't broken, don't fix it!

**Name:** Rachael Button

**Comment:** I disapprove of this bill. Library boards have unique skill sets that position them to do this work on behalf of our communities. Please don't make city council meetings even longer and place undue burden on public officials. Our libraries are doing important impactful work and don't need the addional bureaucracy. Please respect the work our elected officials have already done to appoint volunteer board members from our city and the surrounding rural communities.

**Name:** Suzanne Bauer

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this legislation. Why does City Council need to be involved in a job held by librarians?

**Name:** Vicki Hibbert

**Comment:** Why are Kim Reynolds and Republicans so afraid of local citizen boards? It smacks of Fascism.

**Name:** Sheila Schofer

**Comment:** This bill should be stopped. It is just a subtle rewording of a prior bill that received loads of legitimate unfavorable feedback from community members and library professionals. Library boards, already appointed by mayors and approved by councils, are accountable and functioning well. Residents are pleased with their libraries. This legislation seems punitive in nature and opens the door for censorship and retaliation when citizens rights to access and the publics freedom to read is weighted over an individuals political whim.

**Name:** Billie Wilson

**Comment:** Please let public libraries be free to provide information to all without censorship!

**Name:** Heather Youngquist

**Comment:** I do not support SSB 3168. Please leave libraries and the bodies who govern them as they are. They function well and the libraries provide a great service to their

communities. Please do not advance this bill or anything like it.

**Name:** Brenda Dietiker

**Comment:** Oppose Bill SSB3168's Interference with Library Boards I am writing to you today to strongly oppose Bill SSB3168, particularly its provisions aimed at exerting control over library boards. As a staunch advocate for intellectual freedom and the principles of democracy, I find this attempt to undermine the autonomy of library boards deeply troubling and unacceptable. Libraries are not only repositories of knowledge but also bastions of intellectual freedom, where individuals can explore diverse ideas and perspectives without fear of censorship or reprisal. By seeking to manipulate the composition of library boards and dictate their decisionmaking processes, Bill SSB3168 threatens the very foundation of our democratic society. Furthermore, this bill sets a dangerous precedent by politicizing an institution that should remain impartial and dedicated solely to the pursuit of knowledge and the free exchange of ideas. It is imperative that library boards maintain their independence to uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and serve the best interests of their communities. I urge you to vehemently oppose Bill SSB3168 and any attempts to interfere with the autonomy of library boards. The preservation of our democratic values and the protection of intellectual freedom depend on your unwavering commitment to upholding the integrity of our institutions. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I trust that you will stand on the side of democracy and reject any encroachments on the independence of library boards.

**Name:** Paula Caldwell

**Comment:** SSB 3168. Leave our libraries alone. Vote NO

**Name:** Jennifer Smith

**Comment:** Library boards are valuable experts with time and knowledge to devote to library issues. City councils have enough on their plates. Please oppose the removal of library boards.

**Name:** Jodie Theobald

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB3168 and other bills that threaten to take control away from local library boards.

**Name:** Julianne Couch

**Comment:** Please, do not pass a bill that inhibits people's ability to read, and learn, and grow, as wellinformed full citizens of this community. That's what you'd be doing with this bill, chipping away at our choices under the guise of "saving money."

**Name:** Scott Brown

**Comment:** This is another overt attempt to take over control of public library boards, maybe even worse than SBB 3131 I would be embarrassed if our state Senator introduced a bill such as this and basis discussions with him on February 5, I am sure that he will oppose it if it ever gets to a vote. Shame on you.

**Name:** Sheila Gegan

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill. I use my local library all the time and value this community resource. What is the problem Republicans are trying to solve? Focus on Iowas real problems and not this ongoing culture war that continues to strip the rights of all Iowans.

**Name:** Diane McFadden

**Comment:** This legislation is unnecessary and seems to be politically motivated. I oppose these bills. Leave our libraries out of politics. Libraries are information hubs and truly level the field for all Iowans. Please don't make providing services, information and educated library decisions harder for our treasured Iowa libraries.

**Name:** Marjean CLEMONS

**Comment:** Please vote no on this legislation. Library boards serve an important role in their communities. City councils have other things to deal with.

**Name:** Tina Deeny

**Comment:** Do our lawmakers have nothing better to do? Is this the Iowa we live in, where everything is controlled by the government? Please do something more important than go through the books available to the public. No matter what party you belong to, we can all agree that this is wrong a unnecessary, right? I hope common sense wins here. Move on and do something important.

**Name:** Timothy Pagett

**Comment:** Hey, party of small government, keep your damn hands out of just another in a long list of over reaching government power plays.

**Name:** Amy Roach

**Comment:** As a Library Board Trustee, I strongly oppose this bill. Our library runs week with our board in place. Our city already appoints the board members and already approves the budget. The library board is passionate about our public libraries that are imperative to our communities. My concern is that without a library board, the city council wont prioritize the library as needed and our libraries will lose direction and the oversight needed. The city council has enough on their agenda to take on more.

**Name:** Ali Iserman

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill. Our library boards should be celebrated for their dedication and service to libraries. Library boards spend their personal time, not a paid elected position, to lead libraries. Our libraries are run by citizens, for citizens. Lets not allow Iowa's libraries a casualty of a political battle. Once they are gone, they will never be the same. The simple fact that this bill is being considering is absolutely devastating.

**Name:** Kerry Vande Kieft

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill. There is already an established process for library boards and directors to work very closely with their city councils for hiring practices and for budget. City council already has the authority to review and approve the library annual budget. There is no need to further extend their authority.

**Name:** Sally Benson

**Comment:** There is absolutely no need for this proposed legislation in Iowa. Our libraries are freely and fairly governed by existing boards and do not need city government oversight. Please leave the libraries alone and focus your energies where they are sorely needed, such as fully funding the public schools.

**Name:** Kristen Anderson

**Comment:** My family uses the library weekly if not more frequently. Its a tremendous resource for us and our community and not in need of this change. This bill is an attack on local control and access to information and knowledge. Please dont send this bill out of committee.

**Name:** Linda Muhlbauer

**Comment:** A library does not just serve the members of its city. It serves the population in one town as well as the next nearest town INCLUDING every RURAL resident inbetween. Those rural users tax dollars are collected and redistributed to the library by the County Supervisors. If only city elected council members can represent the

library, then those rural users who cannot vote in a city election, lose their voice. Library Board Trustees are candidates from the librarys service area not just the city. Having a separate board properly accounts for the need to encompass rural citizens.

**Name:** Steve Clarke

**Comment:** I oppose SSB3168, and the other similar ones, and I echo the numerous comments praising local libraries. Our libraries benefit Iowans from cradle to grave. They provide programming for preschools, daycares, home schools, private schools, nursing homes, kids, teens, and adults. The power to alter the local library boards already exists in stature. This bill removes that power from We The People and reserves it for the government. The election last Fall in Pella proves the system works. Democracy works. This a power grab and end around on the voters.

**Name:** Brett Cloyd

**Comment:** I am concerned this bill will make it more difficult for communities to support and manage public libraries. For many cities in Iowa libraries are real success stories. I urge you to oppose this bill. If there are problems in libraries lets find an alternative way to address them. Work with cities and the library community to craft better legislation. Thank you for your time.

**Name:** Andrew Hoppmann

**Comment:** I oppose the proposed bill SSB 3168. Our existing volunteerbased system, where libraries are locally controlled, has proven successful. I fear that the proposed changes could lead to politicization, censorship, and a lack of trust in government involvement. I strongly believe in the positive impact of libraries and see no need for this change. Preserving the current structure is crucial for the wellbeing of our communities.

**Name:** Eden Moad

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168 because I believe that libraries belong in the hands of people who care about them. Keep guardianship of libraries LOCAL because the people in those communities know the best ways to serve each individual and unique community.

**Name:** Terese Grant

**Comment:** I want to add my opposition to this bill. Our pubic libraries deserve to maintain their funding and the current system of having their own governing Boards. This bill is unnecessary and would do hard to the freedom that our libraries deserve.

**Name:** Donetta Stewart

**Comment:** Libraries belong to the people. The place where political agendas have absolutely no business. This bill strips independent, nonpartisan library boards of their autonomy and libraries of control over their assets, all without the consent of the voters in your community. It takes away the will of the people. It opens the door to censorship and politicizing library matters. Help stop this bill. We, the librarians and supporters of free libraries, are watching. "Our liberties we prize, and our rights we will maintain."

**Name:** Angela Doyel

**Comment:** A library is the least discriminatory place in every town or city. You don't have to have money or believe in anything, you don't even have to be a certain age. Why would we get rid of a place like that? Really, before this bill gets pushed through I want every person voting on it to ask them selves, "why are we getting rid of a safe place that provides free knowledge and resources to our community?" The library allows my children to be included in story time, movie nights, books at home, and so much more.the library is more than a building, it's more than dusty books. The library is a home away from home to a large part of every community. If it isn't broken don't fix it. There is no reason to pass this bill in any way shape or form. This

will do nothing but hurt every Iowa community.

**Name:** Reba Gaughan

**Comment:** I would like to express my opinion about this bill. I feel that first of all this type of bill is a waste of your time, there are so many other things that should be discussed. In most Iowa cities library board members are appointed by the city council, so therefore city council is placing their trust in these people to represent those cities and the responsibilities of running the libraries. Please stop trying to control what I can and cannot read, who can and cannot be a part of my library board. We have both city and county representatives on my library board, so everyone is represented not just the city where the library is located. I count on the library as a means of reading material but also as a social gathering for me and my friends. They offer so much to our community. Please do not let this bill pass. Thank you.

**Name:** Susan Craig

**Comment:** I oppose HSB 678, keep politics out of our public libraries. The law already allows a change if a community desires it. NO NO NO

**Name:** Roslin Thompson

**Comment:** This bill does not make sense. There are 543 public libraries in Iowa, all of them with boards made up of dedicated volunteers who represent the community. These trustees are appointed by the mayor and approved by city council. Their focus is the library while council members tend to focus on many other matters. Cities have a long history of appointing boards and commissions that oversee departments. Library trustees undergo training, oversee the budget allocated by the city, develop policies, and have oversight of the library. Why ruin a system that has worked for decades? This is another political move to gain control of an institution that is truly democratic. Listen to the majority of us and leave the libraries alone.

**Name:** Rod Peck

**Comment:** This is not just an insult to the citizens of Iowa. And, this is not the conservatism that the Republican Party used to be known for. True conservatives have always been for the federal gov't leaving the states alone and the states allowing local gov't to do their business. This is something much darker and more sinister. Our country is on a perilous path to farright extremism and for those of us who know history, this is terrifying. I hope we don't look back 10 years from now and say "when the state gov't took over local libraries was an early indicator" because we are headed for a disaster.

**Name:** Laura Blaker

**Comment:** Providing elected officials the ability to do away with library boards without requiring a public vote takes power out of the hands of the people and places it in the hands of a few. There are many benefits to governance by a group of invested community members. They steer our libraries with knowledge and insight, and we would lose the talents and dedication of these valuable volunteers with implementation of this bill. This bill would open up libraries to increased politicization as well as a heavier burden on our councils and city managers. It threatens the strength, capacity, and even the existence of many of Iowa's public libraries.

**Name:** Jill Curry

**Comment:** This bill seems unneeded. Why is government getting involved in the running of local libraries? Local libraries are quite often gems of the community. Is government trying to control who can run the library so they can control content of the library? Governor Reynolds has said "I trust Iowans to make the right decisions." However, continued proposed legislation indicates she does not really trust citizens to do what is right for them and their communities. Please scrap this bill and put efforts into more and better considered governance for Iowa's citizens LISTENING to what

citizens want and need!

**Name:** Jane Nesmith

**Comment:** As a frequent public library user and voter, I strongly oppose this bill. Dont politicize the way local public libraries are staffed and run.

**Name:** Cindy Wells

**Comment:** I ask that you withdraw your support to this bill. This bill will harm library voices and autonomy.

**Name:** John Hammond

**Comment:** I do not support this legislation. Leave our libraries out of political agendas.

**Name:** Connie King

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168 as there is no reason for it. The libraries in Iowa work very well and don't need to be "fixed." I am a voracious reader, and I love the Davenport libraries. The libraries saved me during the pandemic, as I could place a hold on any book and pick it up a few days later from the drivethru. I was able to read as much as I wanted to, and never had to worry about running out of books. All because of the libraries: Iowa's libraries need to be left alone to continue to do their mission, which has been working just fine.

**Name:** Terri Anderson-Peck

**Comment:** I am against SSB 3168. There is no valid reason to change the way that public libraries in Iowa currently operate. Politics should be kept out of the mix.

**Name:** David Muhlena

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this proposed legislation. Taking away the authority vested in a local library board that is dedicated to serving the needs of its community makes no compelling sense. Library trustees undergo training offered by the State Library of Iowa as required by Iowa public library standards. Will city councilors or administrators be required to take such training if this becomes law? I seriously doubt they would, which leaves public libraries vulnerable to city councilors and administrators that might view them with benign neglect at best. Also, this legislation would negatively affect rural libraries the most. Let's just not go there. Do not advance this bill!!

**Name:** Shelly Gerard

**Comment:** I am imploring you to vote NO on SSB3168. Library board members are already presented to city councils and mayors and they are doing their jobs by voting these people on to their local library boards. Did you even check with city council members to see if they wanted to add attending library meetings, voting on policies, take the training required by library boards. My guess is no. I have talked to several of my city council members and they DO NOT want to have to take over the task of running the library. Also you are completely leaving rural citizens out of this equation as they are unable to vote for city council members so their voices will be unheard. Get your hands off of my books and your nose out of my library and what is best for my patrons. I have a wonderful board that works well together and listen to all sides of situations.

**Name:** Sydney Weldon

**Comment:** I STRONGLY oppose any and all of these bills that aim to dismantle the structure of our libraries as we know them and NEED them to remain. Dangerous things are afloat within the Iowa government. Very concerning.

**Name:** Leah Mattox

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168. This legislation is not in the best interest of libraries or Iowans.



Current structures in place work. Keep Libraries local.

**Name:** Janene Krug

**Comment:** I am fully against SSB3168. I dont understand what this bill hopes to accomplish, other than to take local control away from the citizens. Library directors are hired by volunteer representatives from the community who are appointed by the mayor and approved by the city council. If the city council would like to change this, they can have a referendum allowing the citizens a voice in the decision. This bill takes away citizens voices. City government already has oversight of the budget. Libraries work hard to plan for the future, set goals and work toward bettering their communities through library services and programs. Libraries enrich the communities they serve and protect citizens freedom to access information. This bill removes those safeguards to protect these personal liberties. If conflicts arise, they should be worked through together. This bill will lead to longterm ramifications risking the loss of open examination and discussion of ideas, a freedom foundational to our democracy.

**Name:** Sue Gerth

**Comment:** Oppose this bill 100%! Please stop trying to take control of PUBLIC libraries.

**Name:** Hank Zaletel

**Comment:** I strongly disapprove of SSB 3168. As a retired librarian and library board trustee, City councils have no ideas what libraries do let alone how they govern. This is a solution for a problem that doesn't exist.

**Name:** Theresa Johnson

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. Library boards give us access to information in a nonpolitical way. There is no reason to mess with this system, except a nefarious reason. Perhaps the Senate could concentrate its efforts on cleaning up our water, repairing our ailing bridges, (the worst in the nation) and helping to provide rural areas with high speed internet.

**Name:** Bonnie Johnson

**Comment:** I am strongly opposed to SSB 3168 or any bill that takes power away from our local libraries and library boards. Leave the decisions to the library professionals and their allies and volunteers on the school boards.

**Name:** Kay Elsbernd

**Comment:** Please vote against this bill. This bill limits the rights of voters to choose for their community. It leaves voters outside city limits with no voice at all. It removes transparency and oversight currently provided by trained library board members. There is nothing in this bill that improves Iowa libraries or the services they provide to all Iowans.

**Name:** Holly Allen

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168. Libraries are an important public resource for everyone in the community. Having a library board made up of volunteers from that community ensures that the people making decisions for the library are people that care deeply about it. The library is the sole focus of the board, giving it the attention and care such an important institution needs. Libraries are for everyone. Please don't take local control of libraries away from the patrons. This bill would take away the voices of the community when it comes to making important decisions regarding their library.

**Name:** Allie Borgerding

**Comment:** The proposed bill, aiming to strip Library Boards of their governing authority, is

disheartening for our community. Undermining the voters' right to decide how their libraries are governed is a direct insult to the residents of Iowa. Libraries play a crucial role in our community, and their governance should remain in the hands of those who utilize them! Vote NO.

**Name:** Victoria Fernandez

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168, which implies that libraries don't already work with the city in the process of hiring the Director, or allocation of funds, they do. The current process works and does not need to become potentially politicized at the whim of whatever partisan politicians are elected. Please protect our Iowa libraries for everyone and vote no!

**Name:** Michele Patrick

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. Why are you trying to fix a system that isn't broken? Keep politics out of our libraries.

**Name:** Charlie Johnson

**Comment:** I am writing to urge you to oppose SSB 3168. I am a lifelong Iowan who values freedom of expression. Public libraries are a key to providing access to all. Don't let shortsighted political issues damage this vital part of Iowa's social fabric.

**Name:** Susan Mesecher

**Comment:** If this isn't stopped many public libraries will close or be forced to have reduced staff and reduced open hours. Our qualified, hardworking, and dedicated librarians will leave Iowa if this passes. Maybe that's really what you all want.

**Name:** Cherie Dargan

**Comment:** Hello all, There is a current trend to strip away local control from libraries and give it and the library monies to the cities. My observation is that not only creates chaos for the libraries, but also for the cities. They do not have the skills and training to hire a library director. Keep things simple. Let library staff, board, and volunteers make decisions, hire staff, offer programs, and control their budgets. This is a terrible bill and it will harm YOUR constituents. Vote NO on all of these bills. They do not fix a problem. They create them. Most small towns are proud of their libraries, which offer the whole community programs, computer access, training, new books, periodicals, and other resources. Leave them be! Cherie Dargan, President of the LWV BHB

**Name:** Michelle Hukvari

**Comment:** I STRONGLY oppose this bill I believe that this would give city councils unchecked power to hire library directors and use money in a way that serves partisan political agendas rather than in a way that protects 1st amendment rights and serves all people within a community. I deeply value my local library and I want to have access to nonpartisan free public libraries for many years to come. This bill needs to be stopped and I want Iowa lawmakers to focus on real issues, not on setting limits on libraries that are running just fine the way that they are. Please vote NO on this bill and keep partisan politics out of our public libraries.

**Name:** Zach Row-Heyveld

**Comment:** I do not support this bill and neither should the committee members. This bill is utterly pointless and serves no purpose. This bill, like so many recently introduced, is a solution in search of a problem. It provides no tangible or meaningful benefits to tax payers, nor will it improve the lives of the people these elected officials purportedly serve. Stop wasting everyone's time and resources with these library bills that are thinly veiled attempts to disenfranchise voters, circumvent Iowan's abilities to control the institutions their tax dollars support, and turn Iowa into a scorched earth hellscape like Missouri.

**Name:** Kimberly James

**Comment:** Please oppose this bill. Libraries are the center of communities and provide many services. Decision making should remain with library boards. Library boards are best positioned to meet the needs of patrons.

**Name:** Roger White

**Comment:** Count me as another ordinary Iowan and public library user opposed to the reorganization of public libraries. These municipal resources are the lifeblood of most communities providing reading materials, audio and video materials, meeting rooms and other vital services for residents. I have not yet heard a single word of rationale for making any changes in the current structure of public library boards or the operation of public libraries. The property tax change last year already put libraries at risk as the funding source approved by the majority of local voters has been arbitrarily terminated. I have heard much concern about the impact of that maneuver. Whatever became of home rule and local control? Republicans used to cherish both of these concepts, but in the current era, these are suspect and need to be undermined in order to facilitate the power grab and "onesize fits all" proposition that is occurring. Do not allow this bill to survive. Support the local decision making of the voters and kill this bill in the subcommittee now.

**Name:** Tyler Hahn

**Comment:** This bill is not a good fit for small and rural communities and is not a good fit for Iowa. Allow Iowas libraries to function the way they historically have, and lets focus on real issues this legislative session which will benefit Iowans.

**Name:** Michelle Moore

**Comment:** Please vote no to the SSB 3168 bill as well!Leave our libraries alone!

**Name:** Paul Comer

**Comment:** I am opposed to this bill. As a person who has voted for Republicans all my life I don't see the purpose for this government overreach. The mayors and councils already appoint the library boards. Let's minimize government, not expand its reach.

**Name:** Jamie Noack

**Comment:** I am overwhelmingly opposed to SSB 3168. This is a prime example of government overreach on a local issue. The current structure of libraries in Iowa protects the library, its employees and its patrons from political overreach. Yes, library boards control the employment of the library director, but those board members are appointed by the mayor and approved by the city council. They are responsible for putting people in those positions who are qualified and trustworthy. If the city wants to change how the library operates, they can take it to a vote of the people. Isn't that how government is supposed to work...for the people by the people? The overwhelming majority of library boards in the state operate without issue within their city government. To enforce a statewide change due to issues a few communities MAY be experiencing is not acceptable.

**Name:** Loretta Barrett

**Comment:** The library system works well for our community and does not need "fixing". Vote "no" and don't let this bill out of committee.

**Name:** Sam Helmick

**Comment:** The three library board adverse bills filed this week feel like a state level response to a local concern and diminishes the value of local control found at the library board then city council levels. It once again flouts the voice of local voters just as HF 718 did to their petitioned then voted in library and museum levies. They last public comment section on this issue was flooded with opposition. Each meeting and

hearing has been packed with Iowans telling representatives they do not want this. When will their time, voice, and concerns mean enough to refocus attention to bills that aren't so library board and local control adverse?

**Name:** Apryl Henrichs

**Comment:** I strongly oppose bill SSB 3168! Please don't politicize our libraries! Leave politics out of our libraries and keep them as they are. Library board trustees dedicate their time in serving our communities. Please withdraw your support to this bill.

**Name:** Anita Christensen

**Comment:** Public libraries provide invaluable services to members of their communities. Libraries should be independent of politics. Library boards are made up of people who care about their communities and the library and have the best interests of ALL patrons in mind. Please say NO to SSB3168.

**Name:** Tina Koch

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB3168. Our libraries are a free space for knowledge and togetherness in small town Iowa. Please attend to bigger issues and leave our libraries alone.

**Name:** Kathy Gerling

**Comment:** I vehemently oppose SSB 3168 and any other proposed legislation that seeks to cripple public libraries. I don't understand why you are trying to "fix" something that's NOT BROKEN and has been serving Iowans well for years and years. Please leave libraries (and AEAs for that matter) alone.

**Name:** Kara Hageman

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill, and I am disheartened that the Iowa lawmakers would consider moving it forward. Libraries are a vital component of every community, and we need to keep their operations separate from city councils and elected officials. Please listen to Iowans.

**Name:** Stephanie Wood

**Comment:** I oppose and am appalled that this keeps coming back. Local library boards know their community and ensure checks and balances to serve all in the community. Cities have oversight today with boards to ensure the needs and wants of the public are served.

**Name:** M Carol Sensor

**Comment:** I am a member of the Hampton Public library Board of Trustees. I appreciate the subcommittee dropping SSB3131. I was very dismayed to see that a revised bill appeared in the House to alter the governance for libraries. Library boards are made up of volunteer citizens who make sure that their local library runs smoothly, follows laws, passes accreditation and meets the needs of the community. Why do they do this for no pay? Because they believe in free public libraries and literacy for all. I do not understand why there is a proposal to shift these duties to city council. This would require city staff to take on additional duties with no additional resources. Iowa local libraries run very well; why would we change what's been a very effective and efficient governance process? Please do NOT move this bill forward.

**Name:** Pat Kenner

**Comment:** Public libraries offer all sorts of community services including services to the youngest citizens all the way to the eldest among us. Please do not attack their good works for some political reasons. It simply harms the communities they support.

**Name:** Jessica Roman

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168. This bill proposes a poor solution for a nonexistent problem.

Nonpartisan library boards in Iowa work to provide a robust selection of books, materials, and programming for communities. The only clear reason for this bill is to limit the viewpoints, beliefs, and themes of those available books and materials based on the preferences of a partisan council. This bill offers a solution to a nonexistent problem; leave our public libraries as they are.

**Name:** Mary Earll

**Comment:** It is imperative to allow public libraries to handle money that is allocated to them in their specific line item budgets. This not only gives the library authority on spending but also gives them a more direct way to improve the library on a monthly basis. Even though the city has the final say in money spent, the original spending decisions should be left to the library.

**Name:** Dennis Anderson

**Comment:** I want to go on record as strongly opposing SSB 3168. There is absolutely no reason in my mind, that anyone could come up with such a ridiculous bill! Our local library has been running smoothly for many, many years, without any problems, and I should know, being a trustee. Libraries are a special and unique place that cannot be equaled, where the public is welcomed in a tranquil environment to read, learn, connect and more. What an asset complimenting a successful society! You may have heard the saying that "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" and I believe that's the problem with this particular bill. Whoever came up with this proposed bill must be lacking for better things to do, so they came up with something to "change" a successful entity, and in this case LIBRARIES! Isn't "change" always a good thing? Absolutely not! As we have found out in our own country, many times change is not always a good thing! If this bill was to go into effect, libraries, especially in small towns, may have to close, and others begin to deteriorate for lack of funding, improper management, and possible lawsuits. This SSB 3168 bill brings up another question aren't city councils busy enough that they need to be given more work to do, plus take on more liabilities and responsibilities?? I strongly suggest that this SSB 3168 bill be dropped immediately!

**Name:** Laura Kauth

**Comment:** Over my half century, I have visited, worked in, and depended on libraries as a staple of civilization, and I cannot imagine the logical mindset that would limit these amazing resources. But Iowa's current political position seems to prefer the dumbing down of the entire state, so it's no surprise the GOP is pushing to sabotage libraries. Surely we can be better than this.

**Name:** Charles Holdefer

**Comment:** Please do not move forward on this misguided bill. This falls under the category of, "if it's not broke, don't fix it." Clearly Iowa has more urgent priorities than this disruption.

**Name:** Zachary Stier

**Comment:** I am vehemently opposed to this bill. Libraries are a central fabric to a community. They are a place opened to everyone. They provide comprehensive resources, services, and programs to support the wellbeing of the community. You do not understand the day to day connections we go through to support patrons. Sometimes it is as simple as trying to help them discover a new book and sometimes its helping them find resources to find a shelter or food. I take these experiences home with me as they impact me greatly. I fear that my work would be yielded if this bill is passed. We are not harming our communities and all librarians have a responsibility to support everyone. Why would you want to impact the vitality on Iowa communities? Please do better. This is emotionally and mentally draining.

**Name:** Julie Swanson

**Comment:** Please hear all this opposition for SSB 3168. We are appalled and see no valid justification for this bill. Do the right thing kill this bill now.

**Name:** Jennifer Royer

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. Please vote no on this bill. Libraries should be governed by Boards appointed by City Councils.

**Name:** Lindsey Scott

**Comment:** When will the Republican party remember their core value of small, limited government and leave the power with the people? Every bill that is introduced is creating more government overreach and IT NEEDS TO STOP. Vote NO on SSB 3168.

**Name:** Lyndi FlugumCollins

**Comment:** Vote no on this bill. Public libraries need to be able to serve every taxpayers needs. They need reliable budgets and directors who have the freedom to support all of their community members, even if the leadership of the city or region disagrees. Iowans have rights to freedom of expression, and libraries support those rights. Our liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain

**Name:** Jillian Aschliman

**Comment:** This bill removes the necessary checks and balances we currently have in place to ensure libraries are not politicized. If local officials are unhappy with library practices, it is their responsibility as community leaders to work with the library trustees that THEY appointed to find a workable solution and understanding. By putting the option on the table to take on the oversight of libraries without referendum by removing existing democratic processes is an abuse of power. Do not advance this bill.

**Name:** Tamara Kelley

**Comment:** This is a big Nope.I grew up with a momlibrarian, and a farmerdad who took time out of the field to go to bat for his local library when things were going awry. I crawled around the floor pulling as many books off the shelves as I could and devouring them until, at age 3, I was able to entertain people by reading from the newspaper to them. I've been a library patron my entire life, and currently work for a library.Libraries are so much bigger than this issue, and I grow tired of this coming up over and over again with the intent of distracting me from larger, more crucial issues that are more worthy of my time and tax dollars. Obstructionist and antibipartisan politics do not serve me, my community, my state, or my country.Public libraries are possibly one of the last bastions of institutional freedom of information and help to keep alive the concepts of credible resources and critical thinking. The majority of all other places and / or platforms require you to buy something to participate, whether it be a restaurant, coffee shop, or newspaper / magazine paywall.If I were living in Russia or China this kind of move would probably float by without too much notice, but in America this smacks of the stuff of autocrats and dictators and I do not support this bill, nor any of the others that have the same "smell" about them.I urge you to spend your time more wisely.

**Name:** Duncan McLean

**Comment:** Libraries of my youth were safe places to camp out & explore without adult intervention (except for help from the librarian) or criticism from peers. I always learned something new. I always came away with a larger view of the world.Despite the avowed "less governmental interference" mantra, this would be yet another example of legislative straightjacket interference with one's personal freedoms. This one is all the more egregious as an ironfist attempt to narrow one's view of the world. A mind is like a parachute (doesn't work unless it's open) & all that.I strongly oppose this legislation. I am mortified at the attempt to clap irons on our libraries &

librarians. Please review the several WWII movies with the SS burning piles of books. If that doesn't move you, it's time for personal reflection unless you do not permit yourself that freedom.

**Name:** Theresa Presley

**Comment:** As a current Library Board Trustee, I am firmly against SSB 3168. This bill would shift oversight of our libraries from library trustee volunteers to city councils. By stripping Library Boards of their authority, this SSB 3168 legislation will be devastating to the Iowans who rely on library services and programming. Mayors appoint the library trustee volunteers and the city councils approve these appointments. There already is a process for a referendum for the community to vote to change power to the city council. Library Board Trustees receive unique training and have gained expertise related to library functions. To ask city council members who are already focused on municipal matters to take on the immense job of fulfilling Library Board Trustee duties and training requirements is doing a great disservice to community members and rural area the use city libraries. Libraries are cornerstones of education, providing free access to information, technology, and cultural enrichment. Libraries protect the intellectual freedom of all. Please stop the advancement of this bill.

**Name:** Patrick Coughlin

**Comment:** I am vehemently opposed to SSB 3168. There is no reason to change the existing oversight of local libraries and give control to political city councils. The boards are educated and trained on how libraries operate & there is no reason for this legislation when we already have successful system in place for public libraries.

**Name:** Zoe Rand

**Comment:** I STRONGLY oppose SSB 3168, which is just a recoloring of SSB 3131 that HUNDREDS of fellow citizens also objected to just last week. Public libraries are a vital resource for our communities, particularly those that are disadvantaged and rely on public resources. Trying to disrupt a system that works (and is run by people volunteering their time to serve their communities) for the sake of controlling the output of said resource is, at best, counterintuitive and, at worst, fascist.

**Name:** Jessica Board

**Comment:** This change would be a huge, detrimental step in making libraries more political. Public libraries are supposed to be an information source, free from the pressures of any political agenda. This change would significantly impact the ability of Iowa's public libraries to remain apolitical. Leave the current structure in place allow citizen volunteers to continue to oversee the library director and library funds.

**Name:** Beth Campbell

**Comment:** I vehemently oppose SSB 3168 As a lifelong patron of the library, it is the right of every citizen to have access to the public library system without politics and social whims dictating decisions. We have an outstanding library board who practices transparency, fiscal responsibility and serves the community as a WHOLE. Our libraries are the backbone of intellectual freedom and provide access to information in all forms, from all viewpoints and for all people. Why are you advocating for more government control and regulation? This is a harmful bill for democracy and the people you claim to serve. My husband is currently a city council member and would not support this added role/responsibility for local city councils.

**Name:** Robin Bleichner

**Comment:** Why? Can anyone explain why an elected representative of my home want to politicize a free public library? Is this because a lone library refused to pull a book? And some zealots decided that now libraries need to be run and manages by elected city council members? Id love to invite any of those involved in this absurd bill to

attend one library board meeting and see what's actually involved. You are welcome to ours anytime! STOP this madness. Do something, anything that's worth your time. This isn't!

**Name:** Michael Graziano

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill. Iowa libraries should remain responsive to the communities in which they live, which the current board system ensures. I serve on the Cedar Falls Library Board of Trustees and know firsthand how seriously board members take the responsibility of serving everyone in their community. Our city councils already have too many important tasks to oversee. Please do not proceed with this bill.

**Name:** Thomas O'Donnell

**Comment:** Please oppose SSB 3168. This bill would let politicians control who manages a city library. If a few citizens complain about what books the library adds to its collection, the council could cut the library's budget. Councils could hire library directors without professional training, but who hold cultural positions the council shares. A few people on a council would effectively call the shots, limiting what materials are available to citizens, even those who don't share the council's cultural views. The only organization registered in favor of the bill is the Iowa Faith and Freedom Coalition, clearly indicating this bill is intended to block library materials that Evangelicals dislike. This bill also responds to last year's defeat of Pella Evangelicals who tried to change the local library's governance by referendum to block specific materials. This bill is intended to give city councils more control over materials' contents, limiting freedom for all library patrons.

**Name:** Riley Mattice

**Comment:** I stand vehemently against bill SSB 3168, recognizing the indispensable role libraries serve within our communities. These institutions are more than mere repositories of books; they are vibrant hubs of support, learning, and communal engagement, offering an array of resources and services critical to the wellbeing of every community member. The proposed bill poses a significant threat to the autonomy and operational effectiveness of libraries, introducing a risk of politicization that could severely impact their ability to cater to the diverse needs of our community. It is imperative to uphold the existing governance structures that ensure libraries remain neutral, inclusive spaces dedicated to promoting intellectual freedom and serving the entirety of the community without bias. Any attempt to alter this balance not only undermines the foundational principles of library services but also jeopardizes the democratic access to information that is crucial for an informed and engaged populace.

**Name:** Linda Burkhart

**Comment:** I am opposed to SSB 3168. I feel that for some reason there is an interest in involving politics into the Public Library System in Iowa. This should be avoided at all cost! Library Boards make decisions that are best for libraries and the citizens they serve after a great deal of study and research, I am afraid if put into the hands of city councils political issues would creep into the decisions made for the library. Please vote "NO" for SSB3168.

**Name:** Priya Shenoy

**Comment:** I ask that you please vote no as this is an unnecessary bill. There are no current issues with the way that libraries are managed or the way that library directors are hired. Asking a city to involve itself in the hiring of library directors is adding unnecessary additional administrative burdens on a group that does not fully understand how to run a library or who would best serve as library director.

**Name:** Kathryn Fink



**Comment:** I oppose SSB3168, and urge you to table this bill. This bill would politicize and jeopardize the funding and stability of leadership for public libraries throughout the state. Public libraries and library boards of trustees are nonpartisan for a reason, so that they can be welcoming and provide access to information for all members of their communities. Public libraries do so much for communities throughout the state of Iowa. They serve not only as a source of information and recreation for people who live here, but a place where they can access the Internet if they're unable to afford it at home. Libraries help preserve the history of our local communities, they help provide tax forms this time of year, and they help people learn how to use new technology. Most importantly, they provide a place for people to gather with their neighbors: to stave off loneliness, to learn new skills or information, and make connections with others in their communities. They provide a place for our youngest readers to learn and to get socialization with other kids through attending story hour and other programs. They help kids to keep reading in the summer to fight summer learning loss. Libraries also serve the needs of homeschooling families who maybe can't afford to purchase books on all of the topics that they need to cover during the school year. Library funding is very important for all of our communities in Iowa, so allowing city councils to use funds levied for the purpose of funding their public library for other purposes will adversely affect all ages of people from every socioeconomic class in our state, especially those in smaller communities. There is a reason why the hiring practices of Iowa public library directors are removed from partisan politics: in order to protect the freedom of our communities to be able to access the information and reading material that they would like. Allowing city councils to make changes to how their library is funded and structured without referendum removes the voices of the most important people that the public library serves: the people who live there. Why are we taking the voice away from the many and giving it to a partisan few? This bill is unnecessary and would be harmful to the people of Iowa who rely on their libraries.

**Name:** Heather Meyer Boothby

**Comment:** Isn't there other, far more important things for the state to legislate? Maybe focus on economic opportunity and clean water not library directors.

**Name:** Christine Barth

**Comment:** Please keep libraries governed by independent boards and run by professionals with training, rather than relying on political appointments which can be subject to the changes with each election cycle and partisan pressure. Libraries should be for the whole community, not just a select few. I've seen that some of the reasoning behind this bill alleges corrupt library boards. However, there are many more instances of corruption and financial mismanagement in city councils. The reality is both library boards and city councils are usually staffed by public servants who want to make Iowa better. Let's not mess with a system that usually works and deal with individual issues of corruption through due process.

**Name:** Amy Pattee

**Comment:** I am vehemently against any bill that will remove any decision making and/or control, including library moneys, from public library boards and given to city councils. Library board members are either elected by the general population or carefully selected by the city council based on their qualifications to represent the community. There is NO reason to remove local/community control and give it to city government control. VOTE NO to this bill!

**Name:** Courtney Jones

**Comment:** Please read these comments from your fellow Iowans to help decide how to vote. It's obvious the answer is no. Vote NO on SB 3168.

**Name:** Sally Stromseth

**Comment:** Greetings, Having been a children's librarian for 20 years at Decorah Public Library, I

want to express my concern over the Bill SSB 3168. Our library board has been, and continues to be, very successful in guiding our library and its collection purchases, supporting its programs for all ages, and evaluating the library director without the influence of our city council. This should continue as a bipartisan group of dedicated individuals who volunteer their services to the community they serve which includes the vast rural area of Winneshiek County. Thank you, Sally Stromseth 3292 218th Ave. Decorah, Iowa 52101

**Name:** Megan Klein-Hewett

**Comment:** I am opposed to SSB 3168. This bill politicizes libraries and their directors. Local library boards are trained to oversee library functions and services, and do so as community members. If there are concerns about fiscal stewardship in libraries, the library board is more than capable of resolving those concerns, in cooperation with city leadership. I don't know of a library in Iowa that is making fiscal, or library director hiring, decisions in a vacuum which does not include city leadership. This bill is trying to resolve an issue that does not exist.

**Name:** Sharon Groene

**Comment:** I oppose this bill as I have the previous bills that will limit the impact of our libraries for Iowa citizens. Our library boards do a wonderful job and I do not understand why you feel the need to fix something that isn't broken. Please do not politicize our libraries. Drop this legislation and work on something that really needs fixing.

**Name:** Renate Bernstein

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. There is no logical or reasonable explanation for this legislation. Our Iowa library boards have done tremendous dedicated work. We should be thanking them for their service, as they promote programming for the entire community of users, and not just a limited few. Our public libraries are fine, please leave them alone!

**Name:** Beryl DeGraff

**Comment:** Stop this Bill! Public libraries are vital to the community. It's not just a place to get and read books. It is a place for people to connect and learn about things that are important to them, helping to deal with life's problems. This week there will be a meeting about Estate Planning and another about Dealing with Dementia. There is a monthly meeting for Alzheimer's caregivers; Legos at the library where parents and children get to do things together; Dungeons and Dragons and Minecraft provides a safe place for kids to get together. This is just a sampling of how the library connects to the community. To quote Andrew Carnegie: A library outranks any other one thing a community can do to benefit its people. It is a never failing spring in the desert.

**Name:** Suzanne Miller

**Comment:** As a retired academic librarian and former library board member, I strongly oppose this bill. This bill is trying to provide a solution to a problem that does not exist. Library boards across Iowa do an excellent job maintaining our libraries and providing services that their communities want and need. Please vote no on SSB 3168.

**Name:** Joshua Ratel-Khan

**Comment:** We must remember the role of public libraries as cornerstones of democracy, offering free access to information, fostering lifelong learning, and supporting community engagement. These institutions embody the spirit of our state motto by ensuring that the liberties of education and access to information are prized and maintained for all, regardless of their geographical location or economic status. Independent library boards play a crucial role in tailoring services to meet the unique needs of their communities. By allowing city councils to remove or revise these boards for any reason, HSB 678 risks eroding this local expertise and insight,

which is vital for the adaptive and responsive provision of library services. Libraries thrive when they are guided by those who understand their community's needs intimately, not just by overarching administrative directives. The ability of library boards to set policies related to collection development, programming, and access to resources is fundamental to maintaining the intellectual freedom and diversity that libraries represent. Centralizing these decisions risks imposing a one-size-fits-all approach that may not reflect the diverse needs and values of our communities. In a time when information literacy is more important than ever, ensuring libraries have the autonomy to provide a wide range of resources and programs is crucial. In conclusion, while the intentions behind HSB 678 may be aimed at simplification and efficiency, the potential consequences for community representation, fiscal responsibility, and the autonomy of our libraries cannot be overlooked. Our libraries are not just repositories of books; they are vibrant community centers that promote literacy, learning, and civic engagement. They deserve governance that understands and respects their unique role in our communities. I urge you, as a representative committed to the principles of governance and the values of our great state of Iowa, to oppose HSB 678. Let us work together to ensure our libraries continue to serve as beacons of freedom, knowledge, and community spirit, in line with our cherished motto and enduring values. Thank you once again for your consideration and for your dedicated service to the people of Iowa. I am hopeful for your support in maintaining the integrity and independence of Iowa's public libraries.

**Name:** Malavika Shrikhande

**Comment:** I respectfully, strongly oppose SSB 3168. Public libraries are a gem of the community. I come from a place where there were no public libraries. It will be a huge loss if we lose them. City councils have legislative and administrative responsibilities. Public libraries, on the other hand, are cultural and educational institutions focused on providing access to information, resources, and programs for the community. Maintaining independence ensures that each entity can fulfill its distinct functions without conflicts of interest or undue influence from the other. Public libraries need to be free of any political influence and have to work neutrally. This bill will take away the direct voice of the voter, my fellow citizens! Volunteer citizens perform the duties of trustee of a public library. They are appointed by the Mayor with the approval of city council. One of the most important highlights, is the library board goes through continuing education to keep up to date on the various departments, developments in the library and library field. The strength of our public libraries lies in their local governance the volunteer citizens library board members.

**Name:** Barb Keninger

**Comment:** Please do not vote this bill through! This will overburden small town city councils and will hurt their libraries. Public libraries are more than the books on their shelves.

**Name:** Pat Kenner

**Comment:** Please vote no on this bill! The Boards of Trustees take their roles very seriously to provide advice and to oversee various policies and procedures so that the professionally trained and educated librarians can fulfill their roles in expediting programs to all members of the community. They assume certain administrative roles such as hiring the library director so that the city council does not have to take on this responsibility. City Councils and city employees have many other tasks to keep them busy. The libraries provide myriad services to the public. Do not politicize an operation that works well and provides the community with many offerings.

**Name:** Brown Karla

**Comment:** Please do not mess with a library governance structure that is working well with citizen volunteers who love libraries and donate their time to get the necessary knowledge and training to make good decisions. To replace them with already hard working city employees who have enough on their plates is a mistake. Iowans want

their public libraries to stay as they are and resent attempts to change them! Kill this bill!

**Name:** Jennifer Jordebrek

**Comment:** I am strongly opposed to SSB 3168. We need to maintain a system of checks and balances and keep politics out of our libraries. The city council should not have direct control of hiring/firing library directors and should not replace the work our volunteer library boards do. Please leave our public libraries alone and vote against this. Our libraries and boards are doing their jobs and serving every single member of our communities. Please do your jobs and focus on actual problems. Thank you.

**Name:** Jerald Thomas Hawhee

**Comment:** I urge you to reject this bill. Public libraries that foster free access and exchange of ideas across all ideological and political spectra, are essential to a wellinformed citizenry that form the backbone of a healthy democratic society. As such, libraries need to be administered by thoughtful, wellinformed professionals free from undue political influence, regardless of where that influence might come from.

**Name:** Devendra Shrikhande

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. First why fix a system that is not broken? Do we have any research, quantifiable information that Public Library Boards are not working not doing their job? If you do please share so we can confirm this is a step in the right direction. Second this is a rebuke of all the hardworking volunteers (and their families) that sacrifice their time to contribute their experience and work hard to help sustain and grow the allimportant community resource that are public libraries.

**Name:** Jill Martinez

**Comment:** I am against this bill. The independence of public libraries is why they work so well.

**Name:** Tamara Mahl

**Comment:** Unreal. I am in disbelief at what is happening to the values I used to see so commonplace in my state. This is not good for Iowa.

**Name:** Cara McCoy

**Comment:** People put tax monies directly to libraries and expect that money to go to libraries. With small towns only have so much money what is to say that little bit that libraries get wouldnt go to something else. Libraries are necessary for todays society and one of the one places politics dont factor in. In fact, they stay outside the library. If city councils have control over the way the tax monies are spent who is to say they wont change the library policies that stand on freedom for all. The way this works with the two entities the library board and city council there are checks and balances from each group. Giving too much power to one of the two groups is taking away those checks and balances.

**Name:** Gwendolyn Countryman

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168 or any other bill that takes power away from our local libraries and library boards. Public libraries provide important services for the most vulnerable people in Iowa. Please do not interfere with a system which works so well for so many Iowans.

**Name:** Brad Bleichner

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill. If any of the legislators ever attended a Library Board meeting, they would understand the details and hard work these members contribute as volunteers. Our City Council lacks the knowledge and experience to micromanage the daily operations our library. The Librarian position and library funding should be politicized such that a bad council could terminate the position and funding. Please vote no and stop this attack on such a vital part of our city.

**Name:** Beth Drewelow

**Comment:** The idea that a city council, wellmeaning as they might be, have the expertise to micromanage the public library in their town is absurd. The city budget funds other entities, like the water department, as an example, without telling those persons in the department how to dig a trench or how to tighten a bolt because it is usually outside their area of expertise. I don't understand the Iowa Legislature at all. Rather than deal with real problems, they try to "fix" anything that works fine.

**Name:** Charity Tyler

**Comment:** This is a bad bill. Please stop undermining our public libraries and their leaders. There is no need to legislate changes to something that is functioning for the good of Iowans. Please stop this bill.

**Name:** Angela Forret

**Comment:** Iowa libraries perform many more functions than just providing books. As community social services shrink, especially in rural areas, libraries have answered the call to be an information source for folks in crisis, a technology center, and sometimes a food pantry. Iowans love their libraries. Please continue to support them by not allowing this bill to move forward. The levy adjustment last year was a major hit to libraries and this type of legislation would certainly cause some to close their doors to their community for good.

**Name:** Michael Wright

**Comment:** I am steadfastly opposed to this bill. Library governance in Iowa isnt broken, so please dont apply a fix that will blatantly politicize and break our public libraries. Count the comments; this bill does not serve the public interest. Please kill SSB 3168.

**Name:** Amy Bachman

**Comment:** I am strongly against SSB 3168. Library boards and trustees are vital to helping create the most effective resources for communities and their residents. As a librarian our trustees are essential in making our community more diversified and eliminating the chances of power struggles, biases, and misuse of finances that keep our libraries open and running well. This bill MUST stop here.

**Name:** Michelle Steele

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168. This legislation is not in the best interest of libraries or Iowans. Libraries should continue to have their own autonomy to be able to provide access to information to the public without input from a political body.

**Name:** Mary Radloff

**Comment:** HSB 3168 is an unnecessary maneuver that would at best overburden local elected officials, and at worst derail the governance of libraries. Im a former board trustee, past board president, and current finance committee member. And a tax payer at the higher commercial rate.

**Name:** Anne Tews

**Comment:** These recent bills, including SSB3168, are NOT aimed to help libraries or cities. They are being put forward to allow censorship. Censorship is totally contrary to the 1st Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. If certain people do not want to read a book nor want their children to read it, they will not be forced to read it. On the other hand, the book(s) these people oppose need to be available for people who DO want to read it. Along with the need to protect people's 1st Amendment rights is the need to protect individual's Intellectual Freedom. According to the American Library Association, "Intellectual freedom gives people the right to think for themselves. It respects individual dignity and selfrule. This freedom allows people to form their own ideas and opinions by questioning the world around them. Every person has the

right to access information from all points of view, in all formats, and without restriction. Privacy is required for true intellectual freedom. Protection of this freedom assures every persons right to form their own ideas and opinions."People who wish to ban books are not afraid of the books themselves, they are afraid of individuals thinking for themselves and not blindly following the leader.Please stop this and other bills NOW, before they get any further!

**Name:** Melissa Levine

**Comment:** Iowa Libraries need the ability to maintain their own board and priorities seperate from the City Council structure. The city councils are not prepared to uphold the standards to keep the Library accreditation standards to ensure funding. Our communities need the local Libraries to continue to flourish. Please vote to oppose this bill.

**Name:** Amber Dwyer

**Comment:** Strongly oppose SSB 3168. Libraries and their resources must not be politicized.

**Name:** Thomas Grell

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. Public libraries are funded by city, county and state funds. Taking control of these funds away from the library board and giving it to the city council is an invitation to disaster. The councils have no understanding of the day to day operation of a public library.

**Name:** Robin Paetzold

**Comment:** Vote nol. As a public library user, volunteer, and long serving Trustee, I know that this bill is not useful and will decrease local input by moving decision making from a volunteer Board of Trustees appointed by the local government to an already stretched paid city council and staff. Library Trustees are trained to specialize in this work, are mandated to pursue continuing education, oversee operations, financial structures and library policies, and continuously interact with the community on library issues. Our City staff works as consultants when questions arise and we have already developed strong relationships over time. This bill is disrespectful to all involved in public library work.

**Name:** Kathy Graeve

**Comment:** I am opposed to SSB 3168. Public libraries do not need to be politicized. Iowas public libraries are jewels in the communities they serve. They are NOT in need of any change to their boards. This bill is a waste of time. Again, vote NO on this bill.

**Name:** Lindsey Rupp

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168. I do not see city councils having the capacity nor the expertise to effectively manage our public libraries. Leave the management of libraries to the dedicated professionals who already serve as library directors, library staff and library boards.

**Name:** Angela Graham

**Comment:** Please leave Iowa libraries alone. I have total faith in our director & it's board to make the best choices for our local library. They are the persons best able to make these choices. Mayor's & council persons set budgets but are not the best persons to decide the content of local public libraries.Do not allow SSB168 to pass.

**Name:** Joa LaVille

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill. A committed library board of community members is an important way to keep the library out of political whims or gameplaying, which is crucial for a public library that serves as a welcoming and inclusive library for everyone in the community. Why these unprecedented attacks on Iowa libraries? First

taking away our voter approved library levies and then trying to make these changes in how our public libraries have operated successfully for years and years? Iowans support public libraries, and our communities want local control with community members focused on the library.

**Name:** James Countryman

**Comment:** Proposed Bill SSB 3168 Appears to be a solution to a problem that does not exist. I can see no reason to impose upon city Councils the direct administration and running of our local libraries, especially when given no funding to support these extra duties. The current library system Of library boards, and library administrators seems to be working just fine. I never hear anyone complaining about our public library. In fact, quite the opposite. If it aint broke, dont fix it!

**Name:** Jessica Young

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. This bill is unnecessary and only seeks to politicize the governance of public libraries.

**Name:** Julie Heiple

**Comment:** I want to voice my opposition to SSB3168. Keep our local library boards!

**Name:** Michelle Wheeler

**Comment:** I do not support SSB 3168. Library board members are devoted volunteers who are advocates for their local library and help their library successfully serve the community. The library board members are appointed by the mayor with council approval; there is no plausible reason that stripping the board of their autonomy would be in the best interest of the community. The library boards responsibilities, which are taken care of at no charge to the city, will become a burden to city staff and the city council, not backed by any additional funding, should this bill pass. Please do not allow Bill SSB 3168 to proceed.

**Name:** Veronica Ruse

**Comment:** At the public library, there is a book on our shelves to offend everyone. In other words, we do not engage in viewpoint discrimination in the fulfillment of our professional duties. There are many documents adopted by the American Library Association which speak to this core value, most famously the Library Bill of Rights. (A littleknown fact: the Library Bill of Right was written by a librarian from Des Moines in 1938!). I quote from the Library Bill of Rights below:I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.In order to uphold the Library Bill of Rights and the First Amendment, libraries strive to provide impartial access to a wide variety of reading materials across the political and ideological spectrum. As library employees, we strive to fulfill every information request impartially and refrain from imposing our personal beliefs on patrons. I understand that some patrons are offended by the titles they see on the shelves at the public library for personal, religious, or moral reasons. However, I believe it ultimately serves our democracy to make all manner of materials available to the public without censorship. This is the mission that the library board seeks to uphold, and I believe that this mission will be undermined if the library board is stripped of their power to serve in an independent capacity. Allowing elected city officials to make decisions about library operations risks introducing political bias into the functioning of the public library. This bill undermines the very purpose of the public library as impartial in the fulfillment of our duties to the public. Moreover, I believe

that trained librarians who graduated from a school of Library and Information Science are best positioned to run a public library.

**Name:** Sue Ponder

**Comment:** What are you trying to accomplish with this bill? Our library is overseen by a Library Board that whose members are appointed by the mayor and approved by the city council to do their job. These board members are educated in library policies and procedures. Small town city councils have their hands full learning the ins and outs of their responsibilities as it is. I strongly oppose SAB 3168 as both a library director and a citizen.

**Name:** Laura Feyen

**Comment:** This bill is terrible and insulting to the good work libraries and their directors do. This bill does not seek to solve any known problem but rather to politicize libraries. Please do not advance this bill.

**Name:** Kristin Johnson

**Comment:** I oppose bill SSB 3168. There is no need to change the current process of oversight of local libraries and give control to political city councils. If city councils plan to ban books, they should know they are never on the right side of history when they do.

**Name:** Mary Wegner

**Comment:** I am strongly opposed to SSB 3168 and similar proposed library legislation. I served as Iowas state librarian from 20012013 and I know that Iowas current law regarding library boards works well. Cities already have the authority to appoint library board members and to appropriate library funding. SSB 3168 WOULD NOT lead to more efficient library operations and it does not protect intellectual freedom. SSB 3168 does not serve the best interests of Iowans and their libraries. This bill is completely unnecessary. Vote no.

**Name:** D J

**Comment:** This bill is nothing but harmful to Iowa's citizens. Libraries' autonomy protects freedom of information and freedom of thought. City councils are utterly unqualified to do what library boards do.

**Name:** Brittinae Nelson

**Comment:** Libraries are the one of the only free things left to do. I utilize my library every eek in person and daily using its online platform! I urge you to oppose this bill!

**Name:** Blenda Peterson

**Comment:** I oppose bill SSB 3168. Libraries exist as a community resource to books and knowledge. The government has no right to control it.

**Name:** Elizabeth Steding

**Comment:** Please listen to citizens who use their public libraries vote NO on SSB 3168.

**Name:** Sherie Rehberg

**Comment:** I adamantly oppose this bill. Do you understand how many Iowans rely on their libraries, not just for books. Job hunting, social events, WiFi access, and countless other things. I don't understand why you think you have to mess with anything. What is your political agenda? Definitely not to serve your constituents.

**Name:** John Koh

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB3168 for many reasons:1. City Governments already have enough to handle. Library Boards do an excellent job in making sure our libraries are run well.2. Large and smalltown libraries provide many services for the community and our schools. They provide research assistance, early childhood reading



formation, book lending from other sources then the library itself, computers for children who have no computers at home, to name a few.<sup>3</sup> Funding for Libraries will go into town or city general funds which allow for towns or cities to cut or eliminate Library funding. This immediate effect would be closing of libraries, especially in smaller towns and cities because these libraries were unable to raise enough money to continue free services. Those that will survive will have to cut services such as free computer usage and loaning from other sources.<sup>4</sup> Cities and town councils/boards are elected entities. They are subject to political pressure by citizens who want books banned for various reasons. This leads to possible suits for violation of the first amendment. Cities and towns are often sued; they do not need another reason to be sued. They may also hire library directors who do not understand the mechanics of libraries.<sup>5</sup> Library Boards do an excellent service of monitoring questionable items brought to the Board. They also serve as excellent watchdogs for directors who may not be doing a good job. These Boards operate for free and have been for a long time. Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Name:** Teresa Dahlgren

**Comment:** I completely oppose this bill both as a taxpayer and a library user. The current system is not broken and does not need to be fixed. City councils already control library budgets by allocating the overall amount of money that a library may spend. Because of this, they already have indirect control over what a library may accomplish. Library boards are a vital buffer and assure that this indirect control does not end up causing chaos and partisan divides in the library and the community. Library board members have strong community ties and usually have their fingers on the pulse of issues that are important to their communities. Since they devote their time solely to library issues, they have time to weigh the pros and cons and make thoughtful decisions about complicated issues. Boards review the performance of the director annually, and if there were performance issues, boards address them. City council members are busy with many other city governance issues, and do not need this added burden. Please vote No on this bill.

**Name:** Merissa Lewiston

**Comment:** I am vehemently opposed to SSB 3168. Iowa has a robust and well connected Library system that not only provides knowledge and resources for our fellow Iowans, but stewards local history as well. Disrupting the funding and governance of libraries will result in libraries closing, and the detailed histories of many of our smallest towns will be lost.

**Name:** Merissa Lewiston

**Comment:** I am vehemently opposed to SSB 3168. Iowa has a robust and well connected Library system that not only provides knowledge and resources for our fellow Iowans, but stewards local history as well. Disrupting the funding and governance of libraries will result in libraries closing, and the detailed histories of many of our smallest towns will be lost.

**Name:** Phillip Dunek

**Comment:** I am opposed to this bill. We need libraries in our community.

**Name:** Emily Simmons

**Comment:** Please vote no on SSB3168. I strongly oppose this bill.

**Name:** Matti Smith

**Comment:** I STRONGLY OPPOSE SSB 3168 and as you can see so do hundreds of others. Not only for loss of autonomy this would cause libraries but for the attack on free speech this bill represents by taking the voters out of the equation in the say they have in their libraries. Voters have time and time again shown their support for libraries and this shady attempt to circumvent the people's voice by legislators who

have decided to play the role of dictator will not go unnoticed by the public. Accessible knowledge empowers the public and builds stronger communities and only those do not have the best interests of the people at heart would choose to fear that idea, remove the voice of voters in favor of empowering a few, and vote for this bill.

**Name:** Cheryl Talbert

**Comment:** I am writing to voice my opposition to this bill. This bill takes away the local control of dedicated, experienced library boards of Trustees and puts an additional burden on city council members. Library boards represent both city and rural residents, and this bill would remove the opportunity for rural residents in the community to have representation in management of the library. It also has potential to strip funding from libraries which will directly impact the programs, resources, and services libraries provide in their community. It also strips local citizens the right to vote on any changes to the library board composition and duties. This intrusion on local control of libraries is NOT needed and I urge you to vote NO on this proposal.

**Name:** Anne Marie Gruber

**Comment:** Please stop SSB 3168 in its tracks. Bills like this will lead to needlessly politicizing library governance and are a slippery slope toward censorship. A society that tries to limit the free flow of information is on the wrong side of history. The Library Bill of Rights was written right here in Iowa in 1938 and has been an effective library guiding standard since. Do not meddle with independent library boards' ability to hire directors and run libraries.

**Name:** Lori Hunter

**Comment:** I love the library I work for and the wonderful group of people that make it possible. We strongly oppose this bill. Why fix whats not broken?

**Name:** Janice Hiler

**Comment:** I am opposed to this bill, SSB 3168. Volunteers in touch with the community already do the job well and already work with the city council. There is no need for the proposed change as it only adds to big government overreach by taking away from the citizens.

**Name:** Tim Fridolph

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. As a current City Council Member, I can tell you that we are not equipped nor do we have the time to commit to learning all the code surrounding libraries. The reason for Library Boards in my opinion, as with other boards or commissions, is to allow both city and county representation on the board that actually understand how according to Iowa Code libraries are supposed to run. Aside from that, it would prevent rural citizens from being able to vote for those City Council members that would dictate how the library would run. Please stop these bills that are averse to our public libraries.

**Name:** Catherine Shook

**Comment:** Please vote no on this bill. This is yet another attempt to undermine the current functioning structure of public libraries. There has been no demonstrated need to introduce legislation such as this. This would only serve to politicize libraries and would ultimately threaten the public's right to have access to a wide variety of materials in the library, should that be their choice. This removes the voice of local citizens in the most communityfocused space there is in a city. Please do not advance this legislation.

**Name:** Sheryl McGovern

**Comment:** Please vote NO on this bill. The independent board of trustees is intended to separate our personal political agendas from hindering access to information. Passing this bill

opens the door to censorship. This is not something that's brokenput your time and effort into fixing mental health care, infrastructure, and the countless other issues in this state that need your attention.

**Name:** Kristen Mead

**Comment:** Iowa Libraries should be run by boards, NOT city councils! This bill is ridiculous and needs to be voted no!

**Name:** MELISSA MAHON

**Comment:** I strongly oppose bill SSB 3168. There is no need to change the existing oversight of local libraries. City councils do not need this added responsibility. The current system needs to stay.

**Name:** Linda Schmit

**Comment:** I am strongly against this bill. What is wrong with you? Isn't there better things that you have to legislate on? Our local library does a fantastic job serving this small community. I currently have been on the Library Board of Trustees for 7 years. We already report to our local town council. You are doing a great disservice by trying to make libraries a political agenda. Shame on you. The people voted for the levy which greatly helps our library. You are taking away the voice of the people, and for what? We have a mental health crisis in our state and country. Why don't you focus on that issue. Give this up and work on real issues to help all Iowans.

**Name:** Ellis Arnold

**Comment:** Libraries are a specialized field, best managed by Library Boards and those with experience in those fields. This bill represents another area of government overreach. Assigning City Councils the task of overseeing and/or changing the hiring practices for library directors is inappropriate. Given the recent legislation calling for the banning of books, we all should be quite concerned about the systemic undermining of our communities that our legislature seems to be orchestrating. We all should be asking: who benefits from these proposed measures laws? It certainly is not the majority of Iowans.

**Name:** Brianna Sholly

**Comment:** Vote NO to SSB3168. The relationship between City Council and the Library Board should remain as it is to best serve the people of Iowa. Volunteer Library Boards undergo dozens of hours of meetings and Continuing Education training each year, which is an unnecessary burden to place on many already overstretched City Councils. Changing the structure of power will turn many libraries into political spaces, where only one side of the story is told (liberal or conservative), and render the unbiased representation of the ENTIRE community and region obsolete. Librarians and the Library Board work diligently to provide the best services and materials they can to their communities through a budget determined by the Library Board (then approved by the City), and shifting the power to City Council is going to strain that rather than improve it. I encourage you, subcommittee members, that if you haven't visited your local library in the last 6 months, you do so before trying to change what is happening. Libraries are doing some pretty amazing things right now come check it out!

**Name:** Susan Atwater

**Comment:** Please leave our public libraries as they are. They are working well and serving our citizens as they should. Please give against this bill.

**Name:** JeNel Allen Barth

**Comment:** The legislation that is being proposed is once again ignoring the will of the majority. The volunteer library boards are dedicated to library business and are required a specific amount of work and education in order to stay on the board and participate

in the hiring and support of their Library Director and library services. These volunteers are already proposed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council, so I do not understand why this needs to be proposed in the first place. It has been suggested that it is in response to a few "issues" at a couple of libraries in the state. Ok, let's get those library boards the support and training that they need to get through these issues. If there is friction between the board and city council, bring in an expert to evaluate things on that level. There are many avenues for cities who need help; let these cities utilize them. I oppose this bill.

**Name:** Michelle Townsend

**Comment:** Please vote no do not advance SSB 3168. This bill seeks to solve nonexistent problems. In taking away control of our public libraries from library boards, without putting it on the ballot, you're attempting to limit access to books, materials, and services that are otherwise freely accessible to Iowans. Librarians, library boards, and others in positions of leadership with public libraries already engage directly with city councils and others in city government on personnel matters and budgetary decisions through transparent and collaborative processes wherein city leaders have oversight. Politicizing the organization and funding of libraries themselves, in addition to what's on their shelves, is a far cry from the Republican mottoes of small government and local control. This bill accomplishes none of that. Allow our public libraries to continue to serve their communities with the high level of engagement, collaboration, and oversight that currently serves Iowa well. Vote no to SSB 3168.

**Name:** Claire Trimble

**Comment:** PLEASE OPPOSE THIS BILL. This politicizes libraries and will disintegrate the resources the offer to ALL Iowans.

**Name:** Brian Schurz

**Comment:** Once again Republican leadership is showing they believe in local control & limited government if local entities make decisions lawmakers agree with. The people of Pella spoke at the ballot box not wanting to change how their public library is run, and magically this session we have this bill in the Senate subcommittee and we had the House version last week. It wasn't an accident that Rep Hayes sat at the table listening to everyone, but chose not to speak and weigh in officially. Do not advance this bill and try doing some good for a change. Why not work behind the scenes to get the Governor to spend the 2 million to get the 2628 million from the Dept of Ag to feed kids this summer. Do Better !

**Name:** Wendy DeCora

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168. This legislation is not in the best interest of libraries or Iowans. Please stop trying to legislate things that are working just fine.

**Name:** Chris Stoner

**Comment:** This bill, like SSB 3131 and HSB 678, are a solution in search of a problem. I attended the subcommittee meeting for HSB 678 last week via videocall. What I saw was a room full of people passionately speaking out against that bill moving forward, with not a single person there to explain why that bill should move forward. When asked about this, Chairperson Green waved a small stack of papers, saying something along the lines of "believe me, I have messages from many concerned city councils who want to see this change happen", but then left it at that and did not elaborate further. These proposed bills would chip away at library board autonomy in ways that open many windows for politicizing public libraries in ways that would directly harm them and hinder them from being able to adequately fulfill their core mission of public service.

**Name:** Renee Bartling

**Comment:** Please vote NO! Please do not let the Iowa Public Library system be destroyed. The

public library system was setup to protect the civil rights of every Iowa citizen and support intellectual freedom. Library Boards have tirelessly done an outstanding job, please support them.

**Name:** Sara Leiss

**Comment:** Protect Iowa libraries. Vote NO on SSB 3168.

**Name:** Jill Purcell

**Comment:** I oppose this bill. Libraries should be run by those committed to intellectual freedom, not politicians. Shame on the Republicans for their continued attacks on expertise and free expression.

**Name:** Monica Winkler

**Comment:** Once again, libraries are under fire by people who want to have more government control over things that they know nothing about. If they would investigate and talk to city councils, they do not want this responsibility. If you would step foot into a library or attend a library board meeting, you would see how efficient and fair they are. We have always done so much more on so much less. One has to think that if this dedication to passing these types of bills was focused on more productive issues for Iowans (can we mention minimum wage?), it would be a much better use of your time and efforts. Stop SSB3168 and leave libraries to do what they do best serve ALL people!

**Name:** Nellie Waidelich

**Comment:** I very strongly oppose bill SSB 3168. There is no reason to put libraries under the jurisdiction of politicized city councils. Unless, of course, your ultimate goal is to exert control over the literature and resources that libraries provide, which is in direct opposition to the values the American government is supposed to represent (i.e. intellectual FREEDOM). Libraries work well as they are, stop wasting time on this and address real issues!

**Name:** Leslie Gardner

**Comment:** I am opposed to SSB 3168. Library board members are already presented to city councils and mayors and they are doing their jobs by voting these people on to their local library boards. Library trustees volunteer their time to attend board meetings, create and revise policies for the library, create and present to the city council the budget for the library with tax money allocated by the city and county, attend trainings provided by the State Library to maintain accreditation, assist with library programs that are provided for the community, work on fundraising events for the library, hire the library director, and other duties that go with managing a library. Library trustees represent the entire community the library serves city, rural, and any communities that contract with the library to provide library services for that community. Leaving rural citizens out of this equation will disenfranchise those users as they are unable to vote for city council members. Please vote NO on advancing this bill.

**Name:** Peg Hopkins

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill and I think our libraries should continue to be run the way they currently are.

**Name:** Joanna Lochner

**Comment:** Please don't politicize libraries. This legislation is unnecessary and only hurts Iowans.

**Name:** Catie Henoeh

**Comment:** I strongly oppose bill SSB 3168. There is no need to change the existing oversight of local libraries and give control to political city councils.

**Name:** Carol Sommer

**Comment:** I very strongly oppose SSB 3168. Politicians who come and go have no experience or expertise in administering libraries. We have excellent libraries and staff who provide services to one and all regardless of political interest or bent, and they have served us very well. There is NO need to take over the volunteer boards who oversee them. In the history of this nation people have been free to read whatever they want and this should continue. I am an avid library user so have decades of experience with the libraries in the Quad Cities and they do not need a political hand in their running.

**Name:** Jean Kuehl

**Comment:** I strongly oppose bill SSB 3168. There is no need to change the existing oversight of local libraries and give control to political city councils. City councils have enough on their plates.

**Name:** Sue Ketelsen

**Comment:** Please reconsider SSB3168. I worry about losing the autonomy of our public libraries and the loss of levy funds which are needed to provide the vast amount of services provided by our local public libraries. City Councils change each election cycle. Public libraries need the stability of the dedicated library boards. Thank you.

**Name:** Rachel Sindelar

**Comment:** I strongly object to this proposed bill.

**Name:** Lori Walton

**Comment:** Another unnecessary bill. Please focus on areas of the State that need improvement: infrastructure, environment, employment opportunities, etc.

**Name:** Nancy Hall

**Comment:** LIBRARIES = FREEDOM! I think of books as silent soldiers lined up on shelves. Some are pretty. Some are ugly. But the beautiful thing about ALL of them is that they are there for us. Loved the book will read it over and over. Didn't do anything for me won't check it out again. We cannot afford to lose this kind of freedom! Please do not pass these bills. Thank you.

**Name:** Annette Butikofer

**Comment:** Why are we trying to place yet another city department on the shoulders of our councils? They don't need extra duties when they already have oversight.

**Name:** Aimee Kampbell

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168! I am disappointed that after the previous bill SSB 3131 was stalled, that a bill that also takes away the governing authority of library boards, as well as voters has simply changed form and reared its ugly head here. ANYTHING that reduces or eliminates the ability of library boards and library staff is a lose, lose for patrons and local taxpayers. This bill seeks to make city governments "Big Brother" will reduce the quality and autonomy of service provided to communities.

**Name:** Teresa Sexton

**Comment:** Please vote NO and stop this bill. It would be a horrible mistake to politicize our public libraries. This is wrong for Iowa. I adore my local libraries and I'm grateful for our wonderful volunteer library trustees. Please do not advance this bill. It would be detrimental to Iowans.

**Name:** Jody Hixson

**Comment:** I Strongly oppose SSB 3168. Libraries and their resources must not be politicized.

**Name:** Amy White

**Comment:** As a public library director in Iowa for 34 years and a voting taxpayer, I strongly oppose SSB 3168. Library boards and librarians work closely with city councils already. It is an example of a system of people governing people successfully. If city councils run libraries, will the supporters of this bill want to change the system again in four years? Don't city councils have enough to do? Do they want to be in charge of library programs? Will librarians in Iowa lose their jobs? This bill is beyond my understanding and I'm a librarian so am used to helping people figure things out.

**Name:** Becky Miller

**Comment:** I vehemently oppose this bill which strips Library Boards of their critical responsibilities and unnecessarily politicizes Iowa's public libraries.

**Name:** Adrienne Dunn

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168. This bill undermines the primary purpose of all libraries which is to protect and reflect the freedoms of Iowa residents. Providing access for all people to collections that reflect all people is too important not to have a dedicated board to ensure freedom remains integrated in our communities.

**Name:** Jolene Kronschnabel

**Comment:** Libraries are excellent resources for the communities they serve and should not be restricted or politicized. I strongly oppose this bill.

**Name:** Marlo Buzzell

**Comment:** Cease and desist. The opposition to these bills to destroy libraries will not go away no matter how many iterations you present.

**Name:** Bruce Dunek

**Comment:** Iowa led the nation with its educational systems and intelligent way of keeping its citizens informed. Now our libraries serve us and perform even more services for our communities. If our State Representatives wish to really provide informed service as well, they must visit libraries in their districts and gather first hand information on services they provide. These bills seem like a solution in search of a problem that really doesn't exist.

**Name:** Rachel Evans

**Comment:** Libraries are a vital community resource please vote no and stop politicizing libraries!

**Name:** H Pedelty

**Comment:** I strongly oppose this bill!!!

**Name:** Victoria Garnes

**Comment:** DO NOT POLITICIZE LIBRARIES

**Name:** Paul Wermers

**Comment:** please do not support this bill SSB 3168, thanks, Wermers from Spillville

**Name:** Katherine Styrt

**Comment:** I oppose this bill, which is unnecessary and a waste of government time. Our libraries already work well, and this would make them much worse! Adding more layers of bureaucracy to Iowa libraries would be a mess. My family uses our local library at least once a week they're already well run, and don't need any interference! Iowa's libraries are crucial places for kids to learn, play, and meet other kids. Please vote against this bill.

**Name:** Molly Moser

**Comment:** Please drop this discussion. Our local library is one of our greatest assets, and this is due to the library board and staff responding to the needs of patrons they interact with day in and day out. Our library staff makes the library a fun and educational space for kids and adults, and as weve had more and more children engage at the library, they have altered their activities and offerings in direct response to this attracting even more families. City councilors are not in the library every day. They should not be in charge of making decisions about libraries. They do not need more on their plates, nor do we want them to take away decisionmaking power from those who truly know whats needed and valued in a communitys library. Additionally:\* With no additional resources, city workers will be forced to take on additional policy reviews, legal liabilities, complex first amendment procedures, and mandatory training in order to receive state and federal funding.\* The peoples enhanced oversight, transparency, and liability of their public libraries are removed by removing volunteer Iowans from the process.\* The power of the people is removed and places it directly into the hands of municipal staff. It eliminates the voice of people living in rural counties since changes can be made by city councils without a vote.\* Creates fear in library directors since the hiring and firing power of library directors would be shifted to city councils. Librarians could lose their jobs in the future for having controversial materials available based on council members personal opinions.

**Name:** Gail Karp

**Comment:** Please do not weaken our Public Libraries in Iowa they need and deserve all the services and funding they currently have!

**Name:** Pauletta Cox

**Comment:** This is an attempt to over regulate and take power away from library patrons and the library trustees who serve.

**Name:** Joan Taylor

**Comment:** Please veto this bill and let it die. It creates problems where there weren't any. Library Boards are dedicated to preserving the intellectual freedom of their communities and serve because they want their communities to have a thriving library that serves everyone. Hiring a Library Director to lead the work of the library is a task Boards take very seriously and they dedicate a great deal of time to getting that matchmaking process right. Iowa has been known for its strong public library systems for decades. Please don't disrupt that success. Iowans deserve to have quality libraries led by dedicated librarians. Library Boards have the health of the library and its community as their sole focus.

**Name:** Emily Sadewasser

**Comment:** I am opposed to SSB 3168. Local libraries are huge assets to Iowa communities, especially in rural areas. Our library staff and board members are the experts on their patrons and what services are needed in our communities please do not remove decision making power from them.

**Name:** Cynthia Keithley

**Comment:** I oppose SSB 3168. City council members already have to approve any taxpayer funds in our budget; our trustees are appointed by the mayor but the council also has to give approval. So it isn't the case that there is no public or elected official's input into either the board's composition or budget. In addition, city council members do not have the time, training or interest in library operations. Please do not advance this bill.

**Name:** Jackie Chow

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. Please vote no on this bill. Listen to your citizens who



overwhelmingly do not support giving control of public libraries over to the government. Keep the control with the library boards. This bill is unnecessary. Please quit wasting time on bills that nobody asked for and focus on fixing real problems that we have in this state. Iowa is becoming an embarrassment and that makes me very sad.

**Name:** Megan Dial-Lapcewich

**Comment:** I am a library trustee and I strongly oppose this bill, as I have the previous versions. This legislation is not helpful to any Iowans.

**Name:** Barry Kell

**Comment:** Please reject SSB 3168 this is counter to all arguments regarding local control we hear so often. Library Boards are best equipped to handle and respond to the needs, concerns, desires of patrons and citizens.

**Name:** Colette Schmidtke

**Comment:** I have served as a library board member and as president of the board. There were no issues between the library board and the city council. The city council approved the library budget, made cuts when necessary, and approved the appointment of board members. The library director sought counsel from the city administrator and the council member assigned to the library board. If there are problems in other cities with their relationships with the library boards and city councils, those issues need to be addressed locally. There is no need for the sweeping changes in these proposals that would impact every public library in the state. You will be negatively impacting library services that are vital and are a valuable community resource. Reach out to inform yourself regarding the ramifications of such legislation. A concerned library patron, Colette Schmidtke

**Name:** Alison Ames Galstad

**Comment:** This bill unnecessarily meddles with the structure and powers of Library Boards and their governance of local libraries. There is currently a deliberate separation between elected political City Councils and the citizenbased Library Boards who represent the community in governing Public Libraries. This proposed legislation threatens the future of many public libraries in Iowa and undermines free and unencumbered access to information and resources for Iowa's citizens. Please leave this proposed legislation behind, and move on to matters that will benefit Iowa.

**Name:** Logan J. Kummer

**Comment:** I strongly support SSB 3168. It's vital that our elected officials decide how tax dollars are used, instead of unelected librarians. The voters' choice decides what goes in our libraries. Our tax dollars fund the libraries and the librarians salaries.

**Name:** Mary Ann Zack

**Comment:** Stop politicizing the libraries. Were the comments regarding SSB3131, not enough to make you realize this is NOT what the citizens of Iowa want?

**Name:** Mary Anne Gibson

**Comment:** I am writing in opposition of the proposed legislation of SSB3168. In my role as a trustee of the Shenandoah Public Library Board, I am elected to represent a rural constituency of the district served by the Shenandoah Public Library. Allowing a city council to involve itself in the monetary and control concerns of library governance, along with specifically allowing a city to govern the hiring of a library director, would disenfranchise those rural residents who are served by a public library. The potential politicization of library services and decisions regarding personnel is, from my point of view, a solution in search of a problem. It is not at all difficult to read between the lines that the 'problem' is the discontent of a few with decisions that have been made which they have not been able to control. Public libraries should be free of politics

and the political whims of a few people. The current laws regarding library governance provide for representation of a broad range of citizens from the community served by the library. The annual budget for the library is presented to the city council for approval and provides for the oversight that is needed.

**Name:** Rachel Thompson

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. As a library director, I see first hand the dedication of library boards. They are hard working, unpaid volunteers who have the best interests in the library for the people in the community. I respectfully ask that this bill not be advanced.

**Name:** Lawrence Kummer

**Comment:** Libraries are like other public departments and should be under the management of our primary elected officials, not a special Board easily captured by library workers. There is no reason for these special Boards. The City Council can manage the libraries, and delegate responsibility as appropriate.

**Name:** Sharon Moss

**Comment:** This bill would trample Iowans' rights. Is the legislature going to do anything at all to improve life for people in this state? There are many issues that need to be addressed.

**Name:** Kaycee Schippers

**Comment:** I am AGAINST this bill. LEAVE OUR LIBRARIES ALONE!!!

**Name:** Kelsey Patterson

**Comment:** I echo what my fellow Iowa public librarians have shared as to their reasons to STRONGLY OPPOSE SSB 3168. Do the lawmakers advancing this bill even USE their public libraries? Are they LISTENING to the ways that Libraries empower and enrich their communities? Do they go and OBSERVE the impact that Libraries have for individuals in their communities? Do they know that for many of the REGISTERED VOTERS in their districts that Libraries are vital to their quality of life? This bill will destroy the freedoms to access information that the public has a right to. Shifting political whims of City government should not have oversight of library policy or collection development.

**Name:** Kathy Scott

**Comment:** I am against bill 3168. The librarys of Iowa are well run and are doing a wonderful job of serving the people of Iowa. The city councils of Iowa do not have the time or training to take on yet another responsibility and do it well. Has anyone asked them if they even want this responsibility? Please leave the running of the libraries to the board of trustees.

**Name:** David Timmer

**Comment:** I strongly oppose SSB 3168. Like HSB 678, whose language it echoes, this bill would seriously compromise the independence of public library boards and directors. Although Sen. Green, the bill's sponsor, insists that the bill has nothing to do with controlling book acquisition or library policies, two facts speak against that claim. First, the language of the bill would enable precisely that sort of interference. Second, no plausible alternative justification has been offered. At a recent legislative forum in Jefferson, Sen. Green offered "spending efficiencies" as a justification. Seriously? Where is the evidence that this is a problem? Why is this power grab an appropriate solution? Is it just a coincidence that the most recent effort to put libraries under direct political control, here in Pella, was very much motivated by the desire to control acquisition and policy? How dumb do you think we are? The proposal was voted down in deep red Pella. I urge the Iowa House and Senate to vote it down as well.

