

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 13, 2022

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Leaders from Utah Library Association and LGBTQ+ Organizations Oppose Censorship of Children's Pride Display at Orem Public Library

The Utah Library Association (ULA) released a statement today (ula.org/oremstatement/) opposing the Orem City Council's censorship of a planned Utah Pride Month display of age-appropriate children's materials at the Orem Public Library. The statement is co-signed by community leaders representing Equality Utah, PFLAG Provo / Utah County, and the LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce.

ULA became aware that the Council is forbidding a Children's Pride Month display this year from a [May 29 Twitter post from a former Library employee](#). In 2021, facing complaints about Pride displays from Orem Council Member Terry Peterson, the library director Charlene Crozier [stated that](#) "[e]ven though some were concerned about the displays, the overall response to them was positive. Some parents thanked library staff for offering the selection of materials."

In spite of the positive reception of the Pride display of teen and children's materials last year, the City Council has stepped in and ordered that these displays be canceled, limiting the library to one display in an adult area of the library.

The ULA statement notes that, "In the interest of serving all members of the community, library staff have wide latitude to create or not create displays, and to decide where to locate them. However, it is unacceptable, and a possible infringement of citizen's first amendment rights, when politicians intervene and direct staff to eliminate planned displays or have them moved to a less frequented area of the library because those politicians do not like the topic or viewpoint being expressed."

The statement also points out that, "Pride Month is a nonpartisan observance and recognition of the fight by LGBTQ+ Americans to have their rights as American citizens fully recognized under the law." The observance of June as "LGBTQ+ Pride month in Utah" was officially [proclaimed](#) by

Governor Spencer Cox, and the proclamation states that “we must encourage relevant and vital conversations about what it means to love each other, understand our differences, and support our LGBTQ+ friends and family members.”

ULA President Marissa Bischoff, referencing the issuing of the proclamation, stated, “We stand with Governor Cox, and agree with his recent statement in conjunction with the Utah Pride Month Proclamation that ‘there should be nothing controversial about supporting a group of people in our state who have historically been marginalized.’”

Bischoff also noted that, “LGBTQ+ youth are four times more likely to attempt suicide, and just last week it was reported that hate crimes against LGBTQ+ residents nearly doubled in the last year. There are real and measurable health and safety impacts to be considered when politicians interfere with library operations and make age-appropriate materials that reflect the experiences of LGBTQ+ people and families more difficult to find.”

ULA and leaders from Equality Utah, PFLAG Provo / Utah County, and the UTAH LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce are calling on Orem City Council members to publicly and transparently address their actions in this matter, rescind any directives they have given to the library related to displays of materials, and commit to refraining from future directives that seek to restrict library staff from carrying out the mission of the library, or directives that seek to limit access to information for the residents of Orem.