

## R-25

Date: October 3, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

From: Councilwoman Megan Kerr, Fifth Council District  
Vice Mayor Cindy Allen, Second Council District  
Councilwoman Mary Zendejas, First Council District

Subject: Recognizing National Banned Books Week in Long Beach

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### RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation to request City Attorney draft a resolution recognizing October 1 – 7, 2023 as National Banned Books Week in the City of Long Beach.

### DISCUSSION

Long Beach is home to the Friends of the Long Beach Public Library, an all-volunteer non-profit whose mission is to preserve the public library as a place of intellectual freedom and to guard against censorship. The Friends of the Long Beach Public Library also advocate for a strong public library system by keeping the community informed on current issues regarding libraries and help build community awareness and enthusiasm for Long Beach Public Library Services.

Banned Books Week was launched in 1982 in response to a sudden surge in the number of challenges to books in libraries, bookstores, and schools. The annual event highlights the value of free and open access to information and brings together the entire book community — librarians, educators, authors, publishers, booksellers, and readers of all types — in shared support of the freedom to seek and to express ideas.<sup>1</sup> The theme for 2023 is “*Let Freedom Read*”.

This annual event celebrates the freedom to read and encourages open dialogue about controversial and challenging ideas. In Long Beach, a city known for its vibrant cultural scene and diverse population, embracing Banned Books Week sends a powerful message that it values the exchange of ideas, the right to access information, and the importance of nurturing a well-informed citizenry. By participating in this national observance, a committee of the Friends of the Long Beach Public Library will be hosting events and displays throughout the city to help foster an inclusive and intellectually stimulating environment that respects the right to read and engage with a wide range of viewpoints.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://bannedbooksweek.org/about/>

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This matter has been reviewed by Budget Analyst Joe R. Guerrero on September 21, 2023.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation requests the City Attorney to draft a resolution recognizing October 1 – 7, 2023, as National Banned Books Week in the City of Long Beach. The recommendation is anticipated to have minimal impact on staff hours beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is expected to have a minimal impact on existing City Council priorities.

SUGGESTED ACTION

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Megan Kerr", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Megan Kerr, Councilwoman, Fifth District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cindy Allen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cindy Allen, Vice Mayor, Second District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Zendejas", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mary Zendejas, Councilwoman, First District