



May 25, 2023

Dear Textbook Publishers,

We are deeply troubled by the news of some textbook publishers yielding to the unreasonable demands of certain government representatives calling for the censorship of school educational materials, specifically textbooks.

We write to you out of concern that those who are charged with supporting the education of this country's students, such as yourselves, may be tempted to water down critical information to appeal to the lowest common denominator. We urge any company who has not yet given in to this pressure to hold the line for our democracy.

Our country's future is at stake. You hold enormous influence in shaping how our great nation's history is told, and the consequences of your actions will reverberate for generations to come. Honestly grappling with our legacy has long been a cornerstone of American patriotism. If we are to continue striving for a more perfect union, then we must carry out our duty of ensuring future generations understand our full history as well as the contributions of all its people. That includes learning from our mistakes. These lessons are vital to preparing our youth to fully engage in a free and fair democracy. Sanitizing our educational texts for the mercurial comfort of a few today ultimately limits the next generation's ability to make informed decisions for themselves. Moreover, the negative impact that censorship and book-banning has on this nation's students – many already marginalized and underrepresented in society – cannot be overstated during a time when we are facing an unprecedented youth mental health crisis. Each and every single student in the United States of America has the right to exist, to be seen, and to be represented.

It is an important priority of our administrations to ensure that any educational materials censored to appeal to political pressure do not negatively impact our educational goals and values in our states. As such, please know that we will be working closely with all of our school districts to ensure they are fully informed of which texts include comprehensive and accurate educational information – and which have been inappropriately censored – when they consider procurement of instructional materials for the nearly nine million students our states serve.

Sincerely,

Governor Phil Murphy
State of New Jersey

Governor John Carney
State of Delaware

Governor JB Pritzker
State of Illinois

Governor Wes Moore
State of Maryland

Governor Maura Healey
State of Massachusetts

Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham
State of New Mexico

Governor Kathy Hochul
State of New York

Governor Dan McKee
State of Rhode Island

Governor Albert Bryan
Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands

Governor Jay Inslee
State of Washington