

## Open Letter: North Carolina children's book creators call for repeal of HB2

We, the undersigned, are children's book creators, writers, and illustrators who live and work in North Carolina. We are appalled by the new law HB2, as it places our state on the wrong side of civil and human rights and history. We call for the North Carolina legislature and the governor to repeal this discriminatory law.

As writers and artists, our craft requires empathy, imagination, and respect for the truth. We work with the timeless themes of children's literature, among them belonging, justice, fairness, love, and liberty. The Latin root of the word liberty, *liber*, meaning free, is, after all, also the word for book.

The General Assembly claims this law provides for "the protection of women and children." Instead, HB2 allows discrimination against a selected class of people and will subject them to humiliation in the course of taking care of a basic human need. The sections that strike down the rights of local governments to set wages and standards of employment make it harder for North Carolina citizens to earn a decent living and support their families. Finally, the law takes away from all North Carolinians the right to sue for employment discrimination in state court.

We are fiercely committed to tolerance, inclusiveness, and equal rights for all. We will continue to strive to write and illustrate exceptional and inspiring books for all young people. We will continue to talk about all kinds of books in libraries, schools, bookstores, and other venues to our young constituency, and to tell the truth as we see it.

North Carolina is our home. We want that home to be a place where everyone is welcome.

Repeal HB2, all of it.

Jacqueline K. Ogburn  
Clay Carmichael  
Louise Hawes  
Megan E. Bryant  
Frances M. Wood  
J.J. Johnson  
Monika Schroeder  
Lisa Williams Kline  
Virginia Wright-Frierson  
Barbara Younger  
Bonnie J. Doerr  
Constance Lombardo  
Eileen Heyes  
Jake Bible  
Beth Revis  
Mary Stewart  
Barbara O'Connor

Allan Wolf  
Kyle T. Webster  
C.M. Surrisi  
Robin Kirk  
Kelly L. Dyksterhouse  
Laura R. Wagner  
Alexandra Duncan  
Douglas Gibson  
Luli Gray  
Alan Gratz  
John Claude Bemis  
Sheila Turnage  
Frances O'Roark Dowell  
Eleanora E. Tate  
Joanne O'Sullivan  
Susie Wilde  
Laura J. Bryant

Carole Boston Weatherford  
Rosemarie Gulla, publisher, Alazar Press  
Donna Washington  
Megan Shepherd  
Kelly Starling Lyons  
Julie Fortenberry  
Niki Masse Schoenfeldt  
Cathy East Dubowski  
Stephanie Perkins  
Amy Reed  
Laura Boffa  
Jodi Lynn Anderson  
Michelle Annette Moore (Groce)  
Jaye Robin Brown

These independent booksellers are also signing in solidarity.

Suzanne and Dave Lucey, Page 158 Books, Wake Forest  
Brian Lampkin, Scuppernong Books, Greensboro  
Sally Brewster, Park Road Books, Charlotte  
Land Arnold, Letters Bookshop, Durham  
Jamie Fiocco, Flyleaf Books, Chapel Hill  
Linda-Marie Barrett and Eموke B'Racz, Malaprops Books, Asheville  
Leslie Hawkins, Spellbound Children's Bookshop, Asheville  
Leslie Lanier, Books to be Red, Ocracoke

Wanda Jewell, Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance  
Gee Gee Rosell, Buxton Village Books, Inc., Buxton  
Jacob and Alyssa Holster, Uprising Coffee & Books, Eden  
Barbara Galvin, Two Sisters Bookery, Wilmington  
Betty Schumacher, The Bookshop of Chapel Hill  
Sarah Goddin and Carol Moyer, Quail Ridge Books, Raleigh  
Keebe Fitch, McIntyre's Books, Fearington Village  
Tom Campbell, The Regulator Bookshop, Durham  
Christopher Wilcox, City Lights Bookstore, Sylva