



AUTHORS  
ALLIANCE

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April 29, 2026

Senator Mary Kunesh  
95 University Avenue W.  
Minnesota State Bldg., Room 3209  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Rep. David Gottfried  
5th Floor Centennial Office Building  
658 Cedar Street  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Authors Alliance letter in support of HF 3698 / SF 3685**

*Sent via email to [sen.mary.kunesh@mnsenate.gov](mailto:sen.mary.kunesh@mnsenate.gov) and [rep.david.gottfried@house.mn.gov](mailto:rep.david.gottfried@house.mn.gov)*

Dear Members of the Minnesota Legislature,

We write in support of HF 3698 / SF 3685, which seeks to promote fair and sustainable access to digital audiobooks and electronic books for libraries and the communities they serve.

Authors Alliance is a nonprofit organization founded in 2014 to advance the interests of authors who seek to serve the public good by sharing their creations broadly. We have over 3,000 members, including Nobel laureates, MacArthur Fellows, novelists, historians, fan fiction writers, journalists, and others. We advocate on behalf of our members before Congress, the courts, and other government entities.

Authors depend on libraries. Libraries provide authors with one of the most effective means to reach readers, build their audience, and ensure their works are preserved for future generations. When a library purchases a book, authors receive the same royalty they would from any other sale. And libraries provide something beyond that initial sale: exposure, discoverability, and

long-term accessibility. Research consistently shows that library patrons frequently become book purchasers.<sup>1</sup>

Current ebook and digital audiobook licensing practices undermine these benefits for *both* authors and the public. Given the financial constraints public libraries face, existing ebooks and digital audiobook licensing terms often strain library budgets and limit the range of titles they can offer. This significantly concentrates access to high-demand, commercially successful works. As a result, readers have fewer opportunities to discover emerging authors, whose interests we represent. When libraries are forced to prioritize bestsellers due to budget constraints, mid-list and debut authors lose critical exposure. Even popular titles may disappear from library collections when budget limitations make licensing unsustainable.

In many publishing contracts with authors, pricing and licensing decisions are controlled entirely by publishers. Authors have little to no control over how their books are distributed, and in fact authors have little visibility into library sales.<sup>2</sup> Publishers typically demand near-total control in their author contracts. The current ebook licensing system prioritizes publisher profits over authors' interests in reaching readers and preserving their works.

Libraries have always played a distinct and essential role in our cultural sector. They provide equitable access to a wide range of materials, enable readers to explore unfamiliar genres without risk, and support the development of lifelong reading habits. They are a critical pathway through which new authors are discovered, gain readers, and establish viable literary careers. Libraries also inspire new generations of authors. Ensuring that libraries can continue to offer diverse collections helps sustain both current and future generations of readers and writers.

Legislation that supports libraries' fair access to eBooks is indispensable if we want libraries to preserve this role.

We recognize that stakeholders hold differing views on this legislation. We encourage you to consider emerging authors' interests as well as the broader public interest, and honor the

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<sup>1</sup> See Andrew Albanese, *Survey Says Library Users Are Your Best Customers*, Publishers Weekly, Oct. 28, 2011, <https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/publishing-and-marketing/article/49316-survey-says-library-users-are-your-best-customers.html>.

<sup>2</sup> See Jane Friedman, *Are Libraries Eroding Author Income?*, Aug. 7, 2019 <https://janefriedman.com/are-libraries-eroding-author-income/> (reporting on the opacity of publisher accounting practices when it comes to library sales or licenses).

essential function libraries have served in connecting authors with readers. We urge you to support the passage of HF 3698 / SF 3685.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dave Hansen", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Dave Hansen  
*Executive Director, Authors Alliance*