# Controversial ban on 'Same-Sex Parents' book overturned in Cumberland Council libraries after public protests



A controversial ban on the book "Same-Sex Parents" in Cumberland Council libraries in western Sydney has been reversed following a marathon debate and significant public protests. On May 1, 2024, the book was initially banned from council libraries sparking widespread criticism. However, on Wednesday, May 15, 2024, Labor Councillor Kun Huang's motion to reverse the ban passed by 13 votes to 2.

The reversal followed a tense council meeting in Merrylands, marked by heated debates and a significant police presence to manage protesters. Supporters and opponents of the ban clashed outside the council chambers, necessitating the intervention of dozens of police officers.

Local grandmother Caroline Staples, supported by Equality Australia, played a crucial role in overturning the ban by presenting petitions with over 41,000 signatures. Cumberland councillors, amidst a global backlash and potential loss of library funding from the NSW government, ultimately voted to reclassify the book to the junior non-fiction section.

The reversal was significant in light of earlier tensions. Former mayor Steve Christou had proposed the original ban citing constituent complaints. Meanwhile, local religious leaders and community members had divergent views, reflecting the broader societal debate over the book's appropriateness.

The meeting saw contributions from 17 speakers and concluded amid high tensions, with protests outside continuing up until the final vote.