Good evening.

Let me start by noting that I have used this library barefooted since October of 1997, nearly 20 years. Over all that time there was never any issue that I supposedly caused any problems, or that I was supposedly infecting people with, . . ., what? Bare feet do not emit magic death rays.

Yet, on November 30, all that changed. Why? What has changed in the library? Why was it suddenly bad for me to be in here barefooted after all those years? Was there suddenly a new, groundbreaking scientific research paper published?

Let me try to give you a bit of history, as I understand it. As far as I can tell, this library had no official Code of Conduct until 2011. Yes, the 2011 Code of Conduct says that it was revising one adopted in 2007, but I never saw it. The library website did have a list of policies back then, but that list did not include a Code of Conduct. I'm still waiting for Mr. Howard to satisfy my Public Records Request to find out more.

In 2011, then, a Code of Conduct was approved by the Board that said:

> Appropriate attire, including a fastened/closed shirt that is free of profanity must be worn.

Mr. Mapes and Mr. Smith, you were on the Board at that time. Do you remember any discussion regarding it? Did anybody say that you had a barefooted patron that needed to be kept out?

Clearly, that 2011 rule was not interpreted as requiring that I quit using the library barefoot. In fact, I didn't even find out about the new Code of Conduct until a year later, when I noticed that it had been added to the library website. Ms. Goldsberry knew me and my family because we'd been coming to the library so long. And we knew Becky Callender from before then. In fact, Ms. Callender even provided me with an affidavit in 2004 certifying that the library did not have a shoe rule.

Let me also give you a bit of history on library shoe rules and bare feet in public buildings. As far as I can tell, NSNSNS signs were specifically directed at hippies during the 1960s and 1970s. There was a lot of discussion and dissension, and in the end a lot of stores got the signs to keep the hippies out. After a while, people forget why the signs were there and rationalized to themselves that it must have been from safety concerns and/or liability. But that's not what the newspaper articles from the time say.

Now for libraries, Codes of Conduct banning bare feet generally happened much later, around the 1990s. If you look at the packet, you can see how even in the 1970s the ALA's Right to Read campaign was promoted using a barefoot David Bowie. And the Stark County District Library even used bare feet at their library to promote the Right to Read. (I should add that they did not create a shoe rule until 2009--yes, I was in there barefoot many times.)

And after all, just what is "appropriate attire"? It is totally up to, not only interpretation, but prejudice and misunderstandings. What makes you the Fashion Police?

If you look at the next item in the packet, you'll see that the dress codes of the 1970s were concerned about another fashion choice (also related to hippies, by the way). A slight change in history and we could just as easily right now discussing whether Mr. Howard ought to be evicted from the library.

You could even legally fire him. There was a federal court case in 1974 in which a teacher's firing was upheld for having a Van Dyke very similar to Mr. Howard's. And the court said it was OK to limit the teacher's freedom as part of avoiding forms of antisocial conduct and in protecting beholders from unsightly displays. Really. The case is Miller v. School District No. 167, 495 F.2d 658 (7th Cir. 1974). That's how silly these fashion-oriented, decorum-based regulations are.

It's fashion; it's what happens to be popular at the time.

So, again. What changed here in the library? OK, this Board did update the Code of Conduct in September. But the line in the Code of Conduct regarding dress is exactly the same as it was before. Only the interpretation has changed. (And by the way, if a regulation is so vague that the interpretation can be changed this easily, it has constitutional problems.)

Oh, one more thing changed. This Board also passed an Administrative Procedure. And hidden back in Appendix A, under the penalties for violating the Code of Conduct, was this item:

> Inappropriate dress, to include but not limited to no shirt and no shoes.

Did you know that was there? Did you know it was new? Did you know that you had a barefooted patron who had happily used the library that way for the past 18 years?

But that is what is suddenly being enforced against me.

I want to talk a fair bit more about appropriate attire, or should I say, the fashion of the day. If anything, you'd think bare feet would be quite appropriate for a library, since they are so much quieter than any footwear. And it's not as if going barefoot exposes some unknown body part. In fact, when barefoot, no more of the foot is exposed than when somebody is wearing flip-flops. Yet flip-flops are perfectly allowed. It's simply a perceptual problem: it is something different that people are not used to, and then some people think there is something wrong with it.

I notice that, when Mr. Howard took a full month to investigate my appeal when the Administrative Procedure gave him 7 days, he was spending the time talking to businesses and non-profit organizations. I must note that all that does is look for and find others who share the same prejudice. All it does is find people with the same misconceptions

So let me share with you all the places I ***do*** go barefoot.

First, my kids all came up through the Pickerington School District. Nobody there ever tried to kick me out. My kids went to Harmon, Heritage (when it was the Junior High), Lakeview Junior High, Pickerington Central, Pickerington North. I was barefoot for concerts, for games, for meetings, you name it. Nobody there ever tried to kick me out. The same goes for away games and band contests at other schools. And I should also mention my barefooted ways have not ruined my kids: I am quite proud of them. My daughter was a Band President at North. The next year, my oldest son was also the Band President. That son played on the volleyball team. My other son was lead percussionist. Both of my sons are Eagle Scouts, and I was the hiking counselor (leading all of the hikes while barefoot). My youngest son is now a Marine. They are great kids, and I have maybe taught them a thing or two about standing up for themselves and what they believe in, and how not to succumb to arbitrary exercises of authority.

Regarding businesses, I do almost all of the grocery shopping in our household. I'm in the Refugee Road Kroger weekly, barefoot. I have never worn any sort of footwear in there. Before it opened in 2004, I used the big Kroger, and I occasionally still go there. I've never worn footwear in that building, either. Here in town I pretty regularly use the CVS, Walgreens, and Sears Hardware. No problems at all.

I also shop, a little farther away, at The Andersons, Lowes, Menards, SportsAuthority, and Staples. Again, no problem at all.

I do occasionally get kicked out of a business. Here's how that works. It seems that most people really just don't care. They are interested in providing good customer service, so getting kicked out doesn't happen very often. But sometimes there is somebody there who gets their knickers in a knot. They think it is illegal, or something similar, and then they confront me. They tell me it's illegal. I show them a letter from the Ohio Department of Health saying otherwise, and then they switch to saying there's a sign on the door. We check the door and there is no sign. Then they switch to saying it's a liability issue but I've seen way too many insurance policies and know there is no barefoot exclusion in them. I've also seen all sorts of

lawsuits in which people wearing high heels, or even sandals have gotten injured and sued; yet these store personnel aren't concerned about liability there. Then they'll switch yet again to: "It's policy". So I'll ask to see the policy. They can't find it. But I still need to leave, they say. When I check with corporate, I'll go through the same song-and-dance. I get stuck starting with a "service representative" (that is, a phone bank) who just makes up something. They have a policy. Let me see the policy. It's not written down. Eventually it goes to somebody higher who either acknowledges that there is no policy and I am welcome in the store, or, conversely, grants that there is no policy but makes one up on the spot. This is the length some people will go to to defend their irrational beliefs.

Quite frankly, if Mr. Howard called up a business and was told by somebody there that there was a footwear policy, I wouldn't necessarily believe it.

At The Andersons, I managed to contact one of the Anderson brothers. He checked with their lawyers and then he said, "Come on in." And I've spent a ***lot*** of money there over the years because of it. At WalMart, I know from corporate that they specifically don't have a footwear rule. Yet I'll still get confronted there by the random tin-pot "greeter", or some assistant manager, and I have to explain to them what corporate says.

But the nicest thing is that, because of my bare feet, at the places I do go to, I am recognized as ***their*** customer. They know me; they know I'm a regular. They are happy to see me.

It's funny, but over the years as stores have removed NSNSNS signs, libraries have added them.

So let me return to libraries again, since Mr. Howard checked with the OLC and OSU. I've been in the OSU libraries barefoot; also OSU-Newark. I've never been told I couldn't be. I had a meeting with Lynda Murray of the OLC back in 2007. She said then that the OLC's position was that each library ought to determine this for

itself. And then when I brought up the ALA Library Bill of Rights and the OLC Intellectual Freedom Policy Statement, she got rather rude.

Obviously, one library Mr. Howard did ***not*** check with was the State Library of Ohio. When he evicted me on November 11 I even told him that they allowed bare feet and have no problem with my using the place barefoot. In fact, they are quite happy to see me as one of their regular customers. (Let me note that the State Library of Ohio can provide me with a different sort of book than a regular public library. The State Library of Ohio gives me access to things like old books or textbooks, not more popular works.)

Back in 2004 I did an online survey of library codes of conduct, looking at their websites to see if they had a shoe rule. To try to be fair, I only counted them if they had rules online. At that time, about 2/3 had a shoe rule, and when I rechecked in around 2011 that proportion hadn't changed much. In 2011 I also checked a bunch of University libraries. About 1/6 had a shoe rule.

Hmmm. Maybe they know something.

But I have to admit that more and more libraries are adding shoe rules, but without any horrible incident prompting them. Do you think they really have examined this? It just seems to be the-thing-to-do. For instance, in 2000, CNN did a story about Amish kids who used the Geauga County library. And it showed the kids barefoot. But Geauga instituted a shoe rule, who knows why, just last year. It seems they've all bought into folklore and want to follow the crowd. It's just copycatting.

(By the way, and speaking of copycatting, I looked at your new By-Laws. I notice that you enacted term limits. That's just another example of following the crowd but not getting it right. The Ohio Revised Code, in Section 1375.15, specifically gives the School Board the power to select library board members. It does ***not*** give you the power to change that. If the School Board wants somebody to serve a third term, there's not a darn thing you can do about it, just as you cannot throw anybody off the board. Yes, I know how appointments work in practice with recommendations,

but the school Board is always free to ignore your recommendation if they wish, and regardless of what is in your By-Laws. Oh, and while the School Board meeting notes says that this Board recommended the re-appointment of Ms. Hammond, I did not find any corresponding official vote of this Board to that effect. On top of that, I know that about a year ago the library was looking for Board Members after a few quit or moved away. I also know that there were at least 7 people who applied. Should they have been notified of this year's vacancy?)

This Term-Limit By-Law is a perfect example of just doing what other people do. It's following the crowd when you shouldn't. Just like with a shoe rule.

One more thing on this: as I looked at what delayed Mr. Howard so long on my appeal, I was struck by whom he did ***not*** talk to.

He did not call the Fairfield County Department of Health. When he evicted me on November 30, his big concern was not my "attire" but that I'd be contaminating the place (even if I hadn't managed to do so during the past 18 years). If that is really the concern, why did he not consult with experts? Why didn't he call the Board of Health to find out for sure that there is no health department requirement that customers wear shoes in public buildings, and learn why not? (And by the way, there is also no health department requirement that employees wear shoes, either, even in restaurants. I have a long story about that, but I'll save you from having to listen to it.) Why didn't Mr. Howard talk to any other health professionals?

I had my gallbladder taken out exactly 5 weeks ago. It was open surgery, and I stayed in the hospital for 3 days. (The gallbladder was so inflamed it had attached itself to my intestines, so the surgeon could not do it laparascopically.) So, I've seen doctors a lot since the summer leading up to it. I've been in emergency rooms. I saw a gastro-enterologist. I've had an endoscopy. I visited a cardiologist. I had a CAT scan. I had a heart stress test, walking then running on a treadmill. I also saw my urologist. None of them made me put on footwear or were concerned I was endangering the public health. If my going barefoot was so dangerous or medically

contagious, would they not have said something? Oh, they did ask me about it, but they were just curious. “How do you handle the cold?”

If fact, I just saw my gastro-enterologist again yesterday. He said, “Oh, yeah. I forgot you don’t wear shoes. How do you handle this weather?” I answered that it is kind of like ice cream: too much for too long and you get brain freeze. But it smaller amounts it’s delicious. His answer: “You’re a better man than I am.” Then he wanted to know if I spent all my time keeping a close eye out for glass. Nope, in fact sometimes I’ll deliberately step on some to freak people out. The skin on the sole does not puncture easily at all. However, it does slice. So as long as you don’t slide your foot you are quite safe. (I even have a *youtube* video of that.)

And by the way, when one has a recently sliced-open belly and it’s really hard to bend over, you have no idea how convenient it is just to pick stuff off the floor with one’s toes.

In one of his emails to me, Mr. Howard also justified his safety concerns by saying, “The Library’s safety-based concerns relative to footwear for you and all of our patrons is well-considered and evidenced in other litigation you have brought.”

I’m afraid I really need to discuss this.

First, yes I did the cases *pro se*, representing myself, and as Mr. Mapes can tell you, lawyers dislike *pro se*s because they very often don’t know what they are talking about. However, I did have lawyers look over my stuff. In a different case, I wrote an amicus brief before the Ohio Supreme Court. (Actually, I ghost wrote it, since you have to be a real lawyer to file the brief.) For that I had a Federal Assistant District Attorney praise it over the official Memorandum for Jurisdiction. While that case was denied, it did gather 2 dissents (Mr. Mapes, you know how rarely that happens.) After oral argument for one of my cases before the District Court of Appeals, one of the judges wanted to know how I knew so much and did so well. They remanded the case (though I lost the case at a later time).

So there is at least a chance I know what I am talking about. Also, I suspect that Mr. Mapes is aware, possibly from personal experience, that sometimes judges just get locked into a certain kind of thinking.

So, let me tell you about the Federal case.

In First Amendment Law, there is something called a "time, place, and manner" restriction on speech. The classic example is of a sound truck going through a neighborhood late at night. A restriction that would be upheld because that speech could be broadcast during the day. Such a regulation is subject to what is called "intermediate scrutiny", and the official words for that is that the regulation must be "narrowly tailored to achieve a significant governmental interest." Furthermore, the burden is placed on the government (in this case, the library) to show "that the recited harms are real, not merely conjectural, and that the regulation will in fact alleviate these harms in a direct and material way."

In addition, as the ALA Bill of Rights noted, freedom of speech includes not just the right to give speech, but the right to ***receive*** speech, which is exactly what one is doing in a library. This is well-established. And it is clear that, as long as I was using the library for its intended purpose (e.g., not sleeping), the footwear rule was a time, place, and manner restriction on my receiving the speech in the library.

So, what did the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals rule? That the regulation did not "directly impact the right to receive information." Except that it ***did*** directly impact my receiving the information in the library, because it prohibited me from doing so. That's the whole point of the "time, place, and manner" distinction. The Court just made up new law to support what they wanted to do. If you look at the opinion you'll see that they cited ***no*** case to support that distinction.

So instead of using heightened scrutiny, the Court looked at the regulation under the rational basis standard. As Mr. Mapes can tell you, that standard allows a government to do just about anything it wants, and long as it can come up with any kind of excuse that sounds reasonable. It also basically removed the burden of proof

from the library. So, for example, to justify the barefoot rule they pointed to a case where a little 2-year-old girl got her bare foot caught under a door. But there was another incident in which a women in sandals got ***her*** foot caught under a different door. It sounds to me like a door problem, but once the case was reduced to using the rational basis standard, the library was allowed to address what it wanted, and the woman's incident could be ignored. And then the library pointed to incident reports in which blood, semen, urine, and feces had been found and said, "These are hazards". There was ***no*** evidence that those are hazards to barefooted patrons, nothing from any health professional, but they were allowed to speculate. I'd already submitted an affidavit saying that those are not a problem because the skin on the sole is an effective barrier. I use public bathrooms barefooted all the time and never have any problem. ***That*** was ignored, and the Court simply said, "OK". So that's how I lost that case. The Court was so sure that bare feet were a problem that they didn't bother examining things closely. But that's not proof of anything and really cannot be called "well-considered". It's really just more copycatting.

Let me look next at my lawsuit against the Fairfield County District Library. There, during an evidenciary hearing after the case was remanded, the only thing the library brought up was a fear of MRSA (antibiotic resistant staph infections). (Notice that, for a full in-person hearing, they didn't try bringing up urine or semen or feces.) For their expert witness they brought in a Ph. D. nurse. We were told that MRSA is everywhere, and also that it could get into the body through heel cracks.

Yet, on cross-examination of the nurse, I elicited that "everywhere" included the shelves around us, so that our hands were in equal danger from it. The nurse admitted that he went barefoot around his house, where MRSA is also "everywhere". He admitted that "everywhere" even included inside footwear, so people with heel cracks were just as exposed to MRSA when they wore shoes.

But the court ruled against me, because skin is a slightly better habitat for holding MRSA than the bottom of a shoe. That's invoking the rational basis test again. Are you worried about MRSA? Because it's everywhere, in everything you touch, including library books. And you could get it. Boo!

In 2010 my mother broke her ankle in a snowdrift, while walking her dog. Doctors set it and put pins in. And then she developed MRSA. She went through subsequent surgeries, nursing home care, an angioplasty of her leg arteries to increase blood flow, and multiple visits to a MRSA specialist. I accompanied her to all these events, barefoot. None of the doctors said a darn thing about my being barefoot, even the MRSA specialist.

But somehow all our medical personnel, Health Departments, and the like have failed to protect us properly. It's up to libraries to be the nation's first line of defense against MRSA. Riiiiiiight.

And that's the "evidence" that the courts have used to support their decisions, and how well-considered the results of my litigation were. It may have been considered legally correct, but can anyone really say it is logically correct?

There is really no good reason to even bother keeping this rule. It depends on an arbitrary fashion sense and has no reasonable health or safety justification.

In fact, if you'd like to find out more, there is even a book about going barefoot. It's called "The Barefoot Book: 50 Great Reasons to Kick Off Your Shoes", by Daniel Howell. I have some copies here if you'd like to take a look at it. But better yet, it's available at the Library, or at least through the library consortium. Last I looked there were 3 copies available on the system. Aren't libraries great! Isn't it wonderful what people can learn from them, if they only look?

Now, all of the above says why you should not have the footwear rule. We have not even considered yet why, if for some reason you decide to keep the rule, I should not get an exemption to it.

First, let's talk about the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Regarding my letter from my doctor, I have to say that I was really surprised to find out that, when Mr. Howard consulted with your attorneys, they advised him to do

something that would encourage my doctor's office to ***violate*** HIPAA privacy laws. Maybe they didn't know the HIPAA privacy laws, but they're supposed to be attorneys, for Pete's sake!

Their advice probably also violated the ADA, which prohibits "unnecessary inquiries" about a disability. As the ADA guidance page says, you can ask about a disability in order to help accommodate it, but not to deny it.

Let's ignore the fact that Mr. Howard thought I was lying about my letter. But if he had concerns, he could have addressed them to me. How would ***you*** like it if I called your doctors asking about any of your medical conditions without asking you first?

When Congress amended the ADA in 2008, it was because the Supreme Court was making horribly cramped interpretations of what constituted disabilities and denying relief to a lot of people Congress wanted covered. So here's what Congress said in the Amended Act:

> The definition of disability in this Act shall be construed in favor of broad coverage of individuals under this Act, to the maximum extent permitted by the terms of this Act.

And the EEOC said:

> The effect of these changes is to make it easier for an individual seeking protection under the ADA to establish that he or she has a disability within the meaning of the ADA.

You already know that shoes give me problems. I have some numbness that is exacerbated by lost proprioception from wearing shoes. When I wear shoes it hurts my back, my knees, and my right foot.

Do I officially have a disability under the Act?

I have no idea.

But I do know that it hurts me when I wear shoes (whether that is “disabled” or not).

But I would hope it would be considered a disability, just as I would hope that if some store had stairs with 14 inch risers (instead of the usual 7 3/4) and it bothered the knees of a lot of older people, that that would be considered a violation of the act and the people would have recourse under the ADA.

Like I said, I have no idea if I am officially disabled under the Act. But what I do know, is that the attitude being demonstrated here is heartless. You know it hurts me to wear shoes (whether disabled or not); you know there is no decently valid reason, neither “appropriate attire” nor “health and safety”, to make me wear shoes, but the library is doing it anyways.

A couple of summers ago I visited the Abraham Lincoln Museum in Springfield, Illinois. While their website did not have a shoe rule, their entrance pamphlet did. I showed them the letter from my doctor. They did not make me wait 2 months. They did not try to call my doctor. They took about 5 minutes to discuss it, and then they let me in. Because they were not heartless. I had a fine, educational experience.

A couple of years ago, just before renewing my membership in the Ohio History Connection, one of their pamphlets suddenly had a shoe rule. So I contacted their Director, Burt Logan, and explained about my letter. He wrote right back telling me just to make sure I had my letter with me whenever I visited. Because they are not heartless. And I have revisited many times and keep renewing my membership.

Before that, in fact, before I even had my letter, the Ohio Statehouse created a shoe rule (because of me -- long story). However, even after the rule was created, the Director has regularly granted me an exemption. Because they are not heartless. By the way, while in Springfield I visited their State Capitol Building. (Do I have to add that I was barefoot?)

And even before that, in 2008, I went to the Field Museum in Chicago. I was stopped and had to talk to the person in charge that day. I pointed out all of their

exhibits with barefooted peoples (native americans, egyptians, pacific islanders) and that their Maori Meeting House had people take off their shoes as a sign of respect. And I told him that if I were let in barefoot, ***they*** wouldn't notice a difference, but they would have one more satisfied and happy customer. He let me in.

Mr. Howard has made a big deal that I have not been able to suggest an alternative accommodation acceptable to him that did not require my walking barefoot. First, under the ADA, an accommodation is something you do for the disabled, not that the disabled have to do for you.

The accommodation that was offered to me was to use the outside lockers. That is not any sort of reasonable accommodation: it prevents me from roaming the stacks; it prevents me from using the Reference Section; it prevents me from using the computers; it prevents me from accessing the Friends of the Library Book Sale; it prevents me from attending Board Meetings. Look at it this way: suppose you have a patron who is disabled and requires a service animal. You don't want the service animal because, if for no other reason, animals raise health and safety issues (and there are even Health Department rules about animals). If you say that the only accommodation you'd accept is no service animal. That corresponds to saying that the only accommodation you'd accept for me is not walking barefoot. But you don't do that with service animals, do you?

The ADA Technical Assistance Manual addresses this:

> III-4.1100 General. A public accommodation may not impose eligibility criteria that either screen out or tend to screen out persons with disabilities from fully and equally enjoying any goods, services, privileges, advantages, or accommodations offered to individuals without disabilities, unless it can show that such requirements are necessary for the provision of the goods, services, privileges, advantages, or accommodations.

And when the ADA talks about safety, it also says (as I included in my letter to all of you):

> A "direct threat" is a significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level by the public entity's modification of its policies, practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services. The public entity's determination that a person poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others may not be based on generalizations or stereotypes about the effects of a particular disability.

We've already seen how barefoot rules are based merely upon stereotypes and false assumptions. So now, let me turn to religion. I don't like talking about my religion. To me it is a highly private affair. However, as I said in my letter to you I practice a form of Naturistic Deism and Providence compels me to go barefoot as much as practicable. I think you should note that many, many religions recognize the hallowed nature of going barefoot. There are the Franciscan, Augustin, Capuchin, and Carmelite monks and nuns. There are Buddhist monks. There are the Jains. Pythagoras said to "worship with thy shoes off". Of course Muslims take off their shoes at mosques. The Plains Indians' Sun Dance was danced barefoot.

As I wrote to Mr. Howard, my health and religious reasons for going barefoot reinforce each other: the health amelioration of going barefoot only reinforces my conviction that Providence wants me to go barefoot, and Providence wanting me to go barefoot has provided me with an avenue of relief. This is how Providence wants me to interact with it, and this is how Providence wants to interact with me.

Now, I have no idea what kind of advice the attorneys are providing to the library, but none of the kinds of inquiries made by Mr. Howard seem to be looking at this religious issue at all. I am protected by the Ohio Constitution. I easily satisfy all of the criteria required to prove a case: my religion is "truly held". The duration of time helps prove it (and it's documented since my first lawsuit). My continued resistance to such rules also helps to prove it, as does the fact that I still go

barefooted in all sorts of weather and conditions, with exceptions only when conditions get quite extreme.

It is also clear that this regulation impacts the next criterion: it has a coercive effect against me in the practice of my religion.

And at that point a governmental body has to prove that the barefoot rule survives the highest level of strict scrutiny. Mr. Mapes can tell you exactly what that entails, but speculation on harms is insufficient. Underinclusiveness and overinclusiveness both show that a regulation is not narrowly tailored, and is invalid.

This is another reason why I am not receptive to any accommodation that Mr. Howard is willing to accept. Suppose (unrealistically) that the library had a rule requiring that each patron eat a piece of ham before entering, and suppose I were Jewish. What accommodation would allow me to eat the ham?

“Here, you can put it between 2 slices of bread.”

“But it is still ham.”

“We can add mayonnaise.”

“It’s still ham.”

“What about mustard and a pickle?”

It’s not that I’m being uncooperative when I don’t see an accommodation that satisfies Mr. Howard’s desire that I not be there barefoot. And, given the historical background about how these bans got started, and the ridiculous decorum excuses, and the trumped-up health concerns, there is even more reason not to have to bow down to some stupid accommodation.

I think you all should just remove the restriction completely. As I've shown, there really is no valid reason for it. People can learn things. Libraries are wonderful places to learn things. How about learning this?

So, I ask that you just remove the footwear rule. You won't notice the difference and you will continue to have a happy patron. Or if you are too timid to completely remove it, grant me an exemption.

Thank you for listening to me.

And I thank you in advance for doing the right thing.