

To the Board of Trustees:

I am writing to you today as a unionized employee of the Boston Public Library to discuss the firing of Elissa Cadillic, president of our sister union and employee for more than 30 years. This firing is punitive and petty by nature, and motivated by the resentment of being held accountable to the ways in which Boston Public Library have failed their employees.

What makes the library run as well as it does is its employees and it's the *unions* who ensure that employees feel respected and safe. The most recent actions of the current Library leadership have shown us their true colors: they are not our friends and they will actively make our working conditions worse if we decide to stand up to them. This is deeply unacceptable and unethical. It is union busting.

I do not understand why the Library is not just hesitant to work with unions--their very own employees--but actively resistant. In a time where we need to be united to bring stellar service and helpful resources to our communities, the Library needs to work *with* us. Not against us.

Elissa was an invaluable resource. She *is* an invaluable resource. I call upon the Board of Trustees to act now in order to reverse the Library's decision. Her loss is detrimental and affects all of us library workers. Elissa is a hard-working employee who has ensured that the entire staff remains supported and firing her has evoked fear, low morale, and true disappointment.

As the Board of Trustees, you have to ask yourselves--is this acceptable behavior? Is this what you support? Review this decision and reinstate Elissa Cadillic. Stop building a culture of fear and start rebuilding a culture of trust. That culture can start with you, but only if you do the right thing.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Layton
Vice Steward, Boston Librarians Union

Dear Trustees of the Boston Public Library,

I am writing to you today to express my concern about the firing of Elissa Cadillic, AFSCME 1526 president.

This action seems to potentially political in nature, possibly to take revenge on someone who speaks out and criticizes the administration

While I do not know all the details of the case, a similar attempt was made on the president of the PSA Allie Hahn last year based solely on a misinterpretation of something she reportedly said, and not what she actually said.

Could there be a misunderstanding or distortion involved in Elissa's case as well? Or some other reason that things are not as they appear.

Please review this situation to see if firing Elissa is a legitimate and necessary response so that we can know that she was not dismissed out of spite or some other flawed or extreme explanation.

Elissa has been a leader and outstanding fighter for the rights of library workers for decades and this is not the end she deserves.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Diane Parks

To the board of trustees,

I am writing to you as a unionized employee of the Boston Public Library with respect to the firing of Elissa Cadillac. I urge you to review this decision. She is a deeply respected and valued employee for over three decades. Elissa had previously received the Massachusetts Unsung Heroine Award and Recognition from the Boston City Council for Commitment to Building a Better Boston. Elissa has always supported the staff of the BPL in difficult moments, supported members and their families, and fought for fairness, dignity, and respect in the workplace so I am showing my support for her. I do not believe this was a fair decision.

-James H
AFSCME 1526

19 May 2026

To the Board of Trustees:

My name is Madeleine Wright. I recently celebrated my third anniversary of starting work at the Boston Public Library, where I am now one of the Children's Librarians at the Central Library. I am also a proud member and Secretary of the Boston Public Library Professional Staff Association.

I am writing today to support my colleague Elissa Cadillic, Training Coordinator of the BPL and President of AFSCME Local 1526, whose employment was unjustly terminated this past week. I find it extremely difficult to believe that the reasons given for Elissa's firing were legitimate. I don't have the privilege of knowing Elissa well, but her reputation precedes her as a dedicated coworker and a tireless advocate for the staff she represents in her capacity as President of her union. In every instance in which I have worked with her, Elissa has shown herself to be knowledgeable, hardworking, and a person who forms enduring relationships with her colleagues.

The only believable conclusion, then, is that terminating Elissa's employment is a flagrant act of union busting. In my short tenure at the library so far, I have witnessed the relationship between BPL leadership and staff deteriorate more and more. Time and again, this has come from BPL leadership disregarding our union contracts, failing to create or enact policy, and open disregard for BPL workers as human beings. It was this time last year that the BPL attempted to fire both Elissa and our own union President, Allie Hahn, on charges that were self-admittedly on the part of BPL *a miscommunication*. I cannot, then, take seriously the idea that Elissa, a 32-year employee of the BPL and a tireless advocate for her union colleagues, was terminated from her job in good faith.

When I first came to Boston almost seven years ago, excited to begin my MLIS degree, working at the Boston Public Library seemed like a dream. Each time I visited my local Brighton Branch or the Central Library, I regarded the staff with the same kind of awe that I now receive from visitors from all over the world: *You really get to work here? How lucky!*

Now that I am one of those librarians, I am endlessly proud of the work that we do, the impact we have on our communities, and the ways that we show up for

each other. I am also angry and heartbroken to learn, time and again, that while the Library and the City of Boston present themselves as a bastion of democracy, behind the façade are the same anti-democratic, union busting practices they claim to be against. At every protest and rally, our elected officials proclaim, "Boston is a union town." For whom? Evidently not the workers of the Boston Public Library.

Alongside my colleagues from BPLPSA and AFSCME 1526, I urge the Library to reinstate Elissa Cadillic to her former position. BPL leadership has the chance to change course and stand with the people who make this library into the awe-inspiring palace for the people that our patrons and visitors see. I sincerely hope they take it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

Madeleine Wright

Dear Trustees,

I implore you to push back against the firing of Elissa Cadillic. While I am sure many people will discuss Elissa's decades of service or how this is a clear example of union busting, I want to discuss something different: disability.

While I have only worked at the library for a little over two years, I have gotten to know Elissa through her work on the Disability and Accessibility Committee. She is clearly passionate about accessibility, and I have seen her pull from her own experiences in order to advocate for improved accessibility here. But, despite her service in making the library a better place for patrons and staff with disabilities, needing reasonable accommodations *required by law* is being used against her.

This is part of an ongoing pattern of the library's discrimination against staff with disabilities. During our all-staff professional development day last year, there was a heated town hall discussion with management about the treatment of Eve Griffin, who had been denied a pittance of leave to treat her Stage 4 cancer. Immediately afterward, I approached David Leonard and asked a question: "I love my job, but as a person with multiple disabilities, this situation makes me feel like the library may not support me in the future. How do you think the library and staff with disabilities should move forward?" He replied that he was sorry to hear that I had to have that concern at work, but I should remember this is just a job. If I need to, I should protect myself first and look other places if needed.

At the time, I found this refreshingly honest. Part of me still does. While I don't think David harbored any ill intent behind his words, I do think it is telling that the answer wasn't, "We need to be better supporting disabled staff," and instead was, "Well, maybe you should leave."

So which is it now? Are you going to provide better support for staff with health needs, or force us out of the library?

People who know me know that I am generally unafraid to be outspoken, but this is tellingly the first time I've felt nervous speaking up. In fact, I was told when I first started by a superior that I shouldn't even mention my disability during my probationary period for fear of reprisal. This potential firing of Elissa makes me think that was sadly sage advice.

Both Elissa and I cannot easily change our health status, but the library can easily change its support for people like us.

Sincerely,
Malana Krongelb

Dear Trustees of the Boston Public Library,

I was deeply concerned to learn that AFSCME's union president, Elissa Cadillac, who has dedicated more than 32 years of service to the Boston Public Library and its employees, has been terminated. Given her long record of service and advocacy for library employees, in addition to her long-term role as a union steward, this action raises serious concerns among staff.

Many employees perceive this decision, in the context of past targeting of union stewards, both in AFSCME and the PSA, as retaliatory toward union leadership. Whether or not that was the intent, the perception of retaliation can be damaging to morale and trust within the institution. Staff already face difficult and often unsafe working conditions. Staff regularly encounter harassment, threats, and health hazards while serving the public. In such an environment, strong and trusted union representation is essential.

As someone who has worked for the Boston Public Library for nearly seven years, I have witnessed the strain felt by front-line staff and the divide between workers and leadership. Decisions that appear to punish employee advocates deepen that divide, weakens already-low morale, and re-enforces the sense that management and leadership are not supportive of employees, especially the least privileged and lowest paid among us. It gives us another reason to unite and speak out in support of our hard-working colleagues, both privately and publicly.

I respectfully urge the Board of Trustees to review this matter carefully, to reinstate Elissa, and to examine how employee concerns are being addressed across the system.

Sincerely,
Meia Geddes
Digital Experience Librarian
Boston Public Library Professional Staff Association