

I am writing as a member of the Board of Trustees for Minot Public Library, a library volunteer as well as patron, and a mom. HB 1205 is blatant censorship that will negatively affect libraries across the state. It is not for the government to decide what is and is not appropriate to read. As a parent, it is my job to determine what my child reads.

Libraries are for everyone. They provide access to information, entertainment, and education. Denying any of those to constituents who may have a different opinion of what is "sexually explicit", is to create inequities. Sex is a natural, normal human experience and as such has been depicted in art and literature for thousands of years. It is not for elected officials to decide which of those depictions are accessible in a place that is meant to serve the entirety of the community.

There are already policies in place for any member of the public to challenge any materials in a public library, but the easiest option they maintain is to just not check out that material. While I understand that the intent is to protect minors, the fact is, the worst that will happen if a child comes across the type of book HB 1205 alludes to, is an uncomfortable conversation with their guardian. It does not negatively affect a minor's health and wellness.

Please do not criminalize librarians for their service.