

My name is Julie Reiten and I am a resident of Grand Forks, District 17. I am a mother, an avid reader, and a library card holder. I also have two children who will be of voting age within the next 4 years.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed legislative bill that seeks to prohibit public libraries from maintaining explicit sexual material. As an avid reader and supporter of public libraries, I believe this bill would be a grave mistake and would undermine the essential role that public libraries play in our communities.

First and foremost, this bill would be a direct attack on the principles of intellectual freedom and the First Amendment. Public libraries have long been recognized as bastions of free speech and expression, and to restrict access to certain materials based on their content would be a clear violation of these fundamental rights.

Furthermore, public libraries serve as important resources for individuals seeking information and education on a wide range of topics, including sexuality and sexual health. By prohibiting public libraries from maintaining “explicit” sexual material, this bill would limit access to critical resources and prevent individuals from making informed decisions about their own health and well-being.

Moreover, public libraries already have robust systems in place for managing access to materials that may be considered sensitive or controversial, including age restrictions and parental controls. Rather than imposing additional restrictions, we should be investing in these systems and ensuring that all individuals have equal access to the resources and information they need.

Finally, I am deeply concerned that this bill would have a disturbing effect on public libraries and would discourage them from acquiring and maintaining a wide range of materials that are essential to our communities. This would be a significant loss for all of us, and we must do everything in our power to ensure that our public libraries remain vibrant, dynamic, and inclusive spaces.

In light of these concerns, I urge you to oppose this bill in any upcoming votes or hearings. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.