

March 12, 2023

Senate Judiciary Committee Members,

For the record, my name is Andrea Placher and I am the Library Director of the Williston Community Library. Due to the blatant First Amendment violation of HB1205, among many other problematic issues, I am urging you to vote DO NOT PASS.

Our library board is made up of members from both Williams County and the City of Williston. These members are appointed by Williams County and City of Williston Commissioners. As you know, these Commissioners are elected by their respective constituents or as I like to refer to them, their community members. The responsibility of the policies, procedures, materials inventory and day to day business of the Williston Community Library lies with those mentioned above and the library director, as stated in the North Dakota Century Code. Our library currently has policies addressing materials collection and disposal, as well as materials reconsideration requests, and in my six years as director, not one material in our library has been challenged.

The financial and functional burden placed on our library, which will in turn affect Williams County, the City of Williston and its tax paying citizens, would be outrageous. Our library currently holds approximately 50,000 items in its inventory with an additional 2,000 materials added annually. The staff time needed to read every item by the proposed deadline would be literally impossible with current staff and budget. A rough estimate, puts us around 7.5 million dollars. Not to mention if we are tasked with reading every day until we made it through our entire inventory, how are we to run the library efficiently?

It is my opinion that HB1205 clearly violates the First Amendment, is unnecessary as local policies and procedure are already in place, and will place an immense financial and functional burden to North Dakota community members.

Respectfully,

Andrea Placher

Library Director | Williston Community Library

Williston, North Dakota