



NORTH DAKOTA

Family Alliance LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2360

Mark Jorritsma, Executive Director
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action
March 14, 2023

Dear Chairman Klemin and honorable members of the House Judiciary Committee:

North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action is submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2360, and respectfully requests that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill.

Our organization and its constituents feel strongly about protecting minors from explicit sexual material. Many of our constituents have told us, particularly in recent months, that they feel unsafe allowing their children and grandchildren to visit the public library when they are not present, because of the content found in books that are available and sometimes even promoted by the libraries. Both public and school libraries currently allow highly inappropriate books to be read by children, frequently under the guise of educational purposes. Appendix A shows examples of current books from multiple public libraries around our state, the intended audience for each (children and young adults), and descriptions of why each is often banned, per the American Library Association.

We obtained a number of the books found in North Dakota libraries which have been identified as potentially obscene and showed them to willing constituents, both more liberal and conservative. Most responded with disbelief and shock, and even the more “progressive” among them still expressed significant concern. While this was certainly not a formal study, the informal polling of these individuals and families strongly indicates an undeniable desire to keep these books out of children’s hands.

Until now, libraries have been permitted to push the boundaries further and further regarding what is shown to our children, and not surprisingly, the situation has continued to deteriorate. However, this bill would make them accountable to ensure no books in our North Dakota libraries violate our obscenity laws.

Counter to what some may claim, SB 2360 is not out to stifle creativity, artistic expression, or academic research. It specifically exempts organizations such as colleges, universities, museums, and art galleries from the requirements found in the bill. This bill is not about stifling expression or thought, but instead, has everything to do with protecting children from having their innocence stolen from them by age-inappropriate materials.

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We understand that our world today is a complex and sometimes confusing place for children as they try to understand social constructs such as gender identity, or scientific facts about subjects such as biological reproduction, puberty, and STIs/STDs. They need to learn about these things to function in our society – shielding them is not an option. However, Senate Bill 2360 would ensure that they are introduced to these concepts honestly and appropriately when their parents decide it is time. Further, we like that the bill focuses on public libraries, allows for legal action to be taken against individuals (not just organizations) violating the law, and contains an extensive definition of “explicit sexual material”.

North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action wholeheartedly agrees with what this bill seeks to do – protect our children. As a result, we ask that you render a “DO PASS” on Senate Bill 2360. Thank you for taking the time to read our testimony and please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Jorritsma". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Jorritsma".

Mark Jorritsma
Executive Director

Appendix A

Find: Search All Fields

Log in to your account:

Help More Search Options

List View

Keyword: me and earl
Results: 23 matches

Search Refinements

Current Refinements
23 rows in main search.
• No refinements specified.

Add Refinement
Require

Keyword Add

Availability

Medium

Downloadable

Location

Material type

Language

Copyright Year — Add

Cover	Match	Location	Label	Title	Author	Available			Total	Date
						VC	LV	MU		
	100	Adult Audio Books	YA CD AND	audio book: Me and Earl and the dying girl	Andrews, Jesse	1	0	0	1	2015
	97	YA Fiction	YA AND	Me and Earl and the Dying Girl	Andrews, Jesse	1	0	0	1	2015
	97	Adult DVDs	DVD MEA	DVD: Me and Earl and the dying girl		1	0	0	1	2015
	78	Research branch	SHEET MUSIC SHELF 12 ITEM LE 2	Leave me with a smile / by Earl Burtnett and Chas. Koehler	Burtnett, Earl	0	0	1	1	1921
			SHEET MUSIC	I wish you were jealous of me						

Online chat is not available

Visit Us Contact Us Language Kids' Catalog

Source: Valley City Barnes County Public Library, Valley City, North Dakota.

BANNED BOOKS BY YEAR

Top 10 Most Challenged Books of 2021

Find more shareable statistics on the Free Downloads webpage.

The ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 729 challenges to library, school, and university materials and services in 2021. Of the 1597 books that were targeted, here are the most challenged, along with the reasons cited for censoring the books:

- Gender Queer by Maia Kobabe**
Reasons: Banned, challenged, and restricted for LGBTQIA+ content, and because it was considered to have sexually explicit images
- Lawn Boy by Jonathan Evison**
Reasons: Banned and challenged for LGBTQIA+ content and because it was considered to be sexually explicit
- All Boys Aren't Blue by George M. Johnson**
Reasons: Banned and challenged for LGBTQIA+ content, profanity, and because it was considered to be sexually explicit
- Out of Darkness by Ashley Hope Perez**
Reasons: Banned, challenged, and restricted for depictions of abuse and because it was considered to be sexually explicit
- The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas**
Reasons: Banned and challenged for profanity, violence, and because it was thought to promote an anti-police message and indoctrination of a social agenda
- The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie**
Reasons: Banned and challenged for profanity, sexual reference and use of a derogatory term
- Me and Earl and the Dying Girl by Jesse Andrews**
Reasons: Banned and challenged because it was considered sexually explicit and degrading to women
- The Sweet Hereby by Toni Morrison**

Source: American Library Association

Find: Search All Fields

Log in to your account:

Help More Search Options

Log in to your account: To manage reserves, renewals, etc.

Search Refinements

Current Refinements
119 rows in main search.
• No refinements specified.

Add Refinement
Require
Keyword Add
Availability
Medium
Downloadable
Location
Material type
Language
Copyright Year — Add

Previous Searches
Keyword: the absolutely true Results: 116 matches
Keyword: me and earl — 23 results

Cover	Match	Location	Label	Title	Author	Available	Total	©Date
						VC LV MU		
	100	YA Fiction	YA ALE	The absolutely true diary of a part-time Indian	Alexie Sherman	1 0 0	1	2007
	50	~Internet	~OverDrive	OverDrive eBook: The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian	Alexie Sherman	1 1 1	3	2012
	50	~Internet	~OverDrive	OverDrive Audiobook: The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian	Alexie Sherman	1 1 1	2	2008
	46	~Internet	~OverDrive	OverDrive eBook: Witches: The Absolutely True Tale of Disaster in Salem	Schanzer	0 0 0	0	2011

Online chat is not available

Visit Us Contact Us Language Kids' Catalog

Source: Valley City Barnes County Public Library, Valley City, North Dakota.

Top 10 for 2017

View the Censorship by the Numbers infographic for 2017

The ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 354 challenges to library, school and university materials and services in 2017. Of the 416 books challenged or banned in 2017, the Top 10 Most Challenged Books are:

- Thirteen Reasons Why** written by Jay Asher
Originally published in 2007, this New York Times bestseller has resurfaced as a controversial book after Netflix aired a TV series by the same name. This YA novel was challenged and banned in multiple school districts because it discusses suicide.
- The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian** written by Sherman Alexie
Consistently challenged since its publication in 2007 for acknowledging issues such as poverty, alcoholism, and sexuality, this National Book Award winner was challenged in school curriculums because of profanity and situations that were deemed sexually explicit.
- Drama** written and illustrated by Raina Telgemeier
This Stonewall Honor Award-winning, 2012 graphic novel from an acclaimed cartoonist was challenged and banned in school libraries because it includes LGBT characters and was considered "confusing."
- The Kite Runner** written by Khaled Hosseini
This critically acclaimed, multigenerational novel was challenged and banned because it includes sexual violence and was thought to "lead to terrorism" and "promote Islam."
- George** written by Alex Gino
Written for elementary-age children, this Lambda Literary Award winner was challenged and banned because it includes a transgender child.
- Sex is a Funny Word** written by Cory Silverberg and illustrated by Fiona Smyth
This 2015 informational children's book written by a certified sex educator was challenged because it addresses sex education and is believed to lead children to "want to have sex or ask questions about sex."
- To Kill a Mockingbird** written by Harper Lee
This Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, considered an American classic, was challenged and banned because of violence and its use of the N-word.
- The Hate U Give** written by Angie Thomas
Despite winning multiple awards and being the most searched-for book on Goodreads during its debut year, this YA novel was challenged and banned in school libraries and curriculums because it was considered "pervasively vulgar"

Source: American Library Association

Refine your search

Availability

Limit to currently available items

Authors

Beach Boys
Beck
Block, Adam
Brickell, Edie
Christie, Chris
Show more

Collections

Biography
CD
DVD
NonFiction

Home libraries


Dr. James Carlson
Library



Your search returned 7 results. 


Found 1 results in the library's OverDrive collection

Relevance

Unhighlight | Select all | Clear all | Select titles to: Add to... Save Place hold

All boys aren't blue : a memoir-manifesto / George M. Johnson.
by Johnson, George M. (George Matthew), 1985-. 

Edition: First edition.
Material type:  Text; Format: print; Nature of contents:  Literary form: Not fiction; Audience: **Adolescent**;
Publisher: New York : Farrar Straus Giroux, 2020
Other title: **All boys are not blue.**
Availability: **Items available for loan:** Main Library (1) [Collection, call number: **Biography** JOHNSON, G. J67].
Lists: LGBTQ+ History Month, LGBTQIA+ Reads for Adults, LGBTQIA+ Reads for Adults 2022.

 Place hold

- The very best of the Beach Boys : sounds of summer / the Beach Boys.**
by Beach Boys [composer,, audio producer,, performer]. 

Source: Fargo Public Library

The ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 729 challenges to library, school, and university materials and services in 2021. Of the 1597 books that were targeted, here are the most challenged, along with the reasons cited for censoring the books:

1. **Gender Queer** by **Maia Kobabe**
Reasons: Banned, challenged, and restricted for LGBTQIA+ content, and because it was considered to have sexually explicit images
2. **Lawn Boy** by **Jonathan Evison**
Reasons: Banned and challenged for LGBTQIA+ content and because it was considered to be sexually explicit
3. **All Boys Aren't Blue** by **George M. Johnson**
Reasons: Banned and challenged for LGBTQIA+ content, profanity, and because it was considered to be sexually explicit
4. **Out of Darkness** by **Ashley Hope Perez**
Reasons: Banned, challenged, and restricted for depictions of abuse and because it was considered to be sexually explicit
5. **The Hate U Give** by **Angie Thomas**
Reasons: Banned and challenged for profanity, violence, and because it was thought to promote an anti-police message and indoctrination of a social agenda
6. **The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian** by **Sherman Alexie**
Reasons: Banned and challenged for profanity, sexual references and use of a derogatory term
7. **Me and Earl and the Dying Girl** by **Jesse Andrews**
Reasons: Banned and challenged because it was considered sexually explicit and degrading to women
8. **The Bluest Eye** by **Toni Morrison**
Reasons: Banned and challenged because it depicts child sexual abuse and was considered sexually explicit
9. **This Book is Gay** by **Juno Dawson**
Reasons: Banned, challenged, relocated, and restricted for providing sexual education and LGBTQIA+ content.
10. **Beyond Magenta** by **Susan Kuklin**
Reasons: Banned and challenged for LGBTQIA+ content and because it was considered to be sexually explicit.

Source: American Library Association

MELISSA

ALIX BEND



2015

2. **George** by *Gino, Alex*, author

Call Number: PZ7.1.G576 Geo 2015

Summary: "When people look at George, they think they see a boy. But she knows she's not a boy. She knows she's a girl. George thinks she'll have to keep this a secret forever. Then her teacher announces that their class play is going to be Charlotte's Web. George really, really, REALLY wants to play Charlotte. But the teacher says she can't even try out for the part ... because she's a boy. With the help of her best friend, Kelly, George comes up with a plan. Not just so she can be Charlotte-- but so everyone can know who she is, once and for all"-- Provided by publisher.

Web Site: [Alex Gino blog](#)

Target Audience Note: Grades 3-7.

Source: OCLC WorldCat



FULL DISPLAY



PLACE REQUEST

Add to My List

Source: Grand Forks Public Library

Top 11 Most Challenged Books of 2018

View the Censorship by the Numbers infographic for 2018

The ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked **347 challenges** to library, school and university materials and services in 2018. Of the **483 books** challenged or banned in 2018, the Top 11 Most Challenged Books are:

1. **George by Alex Gino**

Reasons: banned, challenged, and relocated because it was believed to encourage children to clear browser history and change their bodies using hormones, and for mentioning "dirty magazines," describing male anatomy, "creating confusion," and including a transgender character

2. **A Day in the Life of Merlon Bundo by Jill Twiss, illustrated by EG Keller**

Reasons: banned and challenged for including LGBTQIA+ content, and for political and religious viewpoints

3. **Captain Underpants series written and illustrated by Dav Pilkey**

Reasons: series was challenged because it was perceived as encouraging disruptive behavior, while *Captain Underpants and the Sensational Saga of Sir Stinks-A-Lot* was challenged for including a same-sex couple

4. **The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas**

Reasons: banned and challenged because it was deemed "anti-cop," and for profanity, drug use, and sexual references

5. **Drama written and illustrated by Raina Telgemeier**

Reasons: banned and challenged for including LGBTQIA+ characters and themes

6. **Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher**

Reasons: banned, challenged, and restricted for addressing teen suicide

7. **This One Summer by Mariko Tamaki, illustrated by Jillian Tamaki**

Source: American Library Association