

March 14th, 2023

This testimony is in opposition to SB 2360. I urge you to vote DO NOT PASS.

As a lifelong reader and self-proclaimed bookworm, I cannot begin to fathom why our government feels it's appropriate to censor the books that are available for their citizens to read. In a time where there is a push for focusing on the fundamental rights of parents, why isn't this being viewed as a fundamental right?

Adults should have the right to choose what they want to read, and guardians can set boundaries for minors in their care. Books create safe spaces and feed the imagination. They introduce you to people and places you've never seen before. Books share the life stories of our fellow man, from all walks of life. Life is not always picture perfect or turns out as we expect, and books are there to help us expand our world view.

In a state with a small minority population, I treasure being able to learn about people who are different from me by reading their stories. I buy books for my niece and nephew to help expand their views of people who are different from them. They get to learn about people of color, different religions, and types of love. These books create wonderful talking points and bonding time in the evening with their parents. Their generation will grow up being more open and accepting because of all the information at their fingertips.

Don't take a step back into the past by removing content that go against some points of view. Leap forward and learn to respect those who are different from you.

I urge you to please vote DO NOT PASS on SB 2360.

Respectfully,

Jaci Bjornstad