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Chairperson Larson and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am reaching out to urge you to oppose SB 2360. For these reasons:

Reason#1: The bill is redundant and unnecessary. Public schools and libraries already have filtering under the CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act). As a librarian we have filtering on all computers, including our Wi-Fi. If a child/teen has a device provided by the parent, it is up to the parent to set up and monitor what they are accessing especially outside of school or library grounds. As a parent, I set the expectations with my teens, and set up internet filtering on our home Wi-Fi. That is my responsibility as a parent. If my child goes over to a friend's house who doesn't know how to put restrictions on, then as a parent I've already communicated to them what is acceptable and the consequences of their actions. I trust my children to make smart choices, and be responsible. I don't hold the other child's parents accountable if MY children make poor choices.

Reason #2: The bill is trying to re-define the Supreme Court's ruling on obscenity. It crosses out words like ordinary and replaces it with reasonable and crosses out contemporary, leaving North Dakota standards. How would you define reasonable North Dakotan standards? I'm a reasonable adult, and I've lived in North Dakota my whole life. By what reasonable North Dakotan standard is this bill supposed to go by? Libraries have a policies/procedure in place if a person dislikes or doesn't agree with any book/material. As a librarian, I respect and understand a person's right to read what they choose, and if someone doesn't agree with a book any book they have the right to Request a Reconsideration of that book/material. If the issues of books of a "sexually explicit" nature. Then do we remove everything that is deemed "sexually explicit"? I've had patrons come in and complain an Inspirational Romance was too "sexually explicit" because the main characters "kissed and embraced". Plenty of teens in my community read Inspirational Romance, do I deny them the opportunity to read books their parents have approved because another person believed it to be sexually explicit? The Miller Test already defines obscenity and pornography, and the books/materials this bill is targeting do not fit in the guidelines set forth by the Supreme Court. If this bill were to pass, it would create many restrictions for books already on the shelf, including books like the Holy Bible, Classic Pieces of Literature, and even Inspirational Romance.

Reason #3: This bill is attacking Educators and Librarians. It is my understanding that this bill was introduced to response to a book that has been challenged both at Dickinson and Valley City Barnes County Public Library. The book *Let's Talk About it: The Teen's Guide to Sex, Relationships and Being*

Human by Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan. The book in question is a Graphic Novel Sex Education Text. I would like to reiterate the library did nothing to sensationalize or promote this book. It sat on the shelf at the Valley City Barnes County Public Library for almost a year and a half, with no checkouts. It wasn't until the local paper published a piece painting the book as salacious, people began to cry foul. The article was full of misinformation and missed the overarching message of the book. The wording "taken as a whole" is incredibly important in terms of this book, because I have read this book, and the message of this book is "Communication". To empower teens and young adults the importance of communication in relationships especially sexual ones. Now, I'm not an expert in pornography or obscene materials, but I challenge anyone to find legitimate pornography that's message is the importance of communication in a sexual relationship. That information was not mentioned anywhere in the article. But the article or the writer aren't the ones being persecuted, instead this bill is going after the librarians and educators.

In the course of this book challenge. The library and staff were painted as the bad guys, when all we did was make information available to those who choose to read it. I and other staff members have been threatened, bullied, and treated with contempt. I feared for the safety of my children, the staff, and myself. Now this bill would do further damage by persecuting librarians and educators who work hard to provide educational materials for everyone in the community who wish to seek it out.

Librarians and educators work hard to provide services to the community, and we are constantly seeking out educational opportunities to better serve our communities. We attend conferences, webinars, continuing education classes, further our education by earning Masters in Education and Masters in Library Science so we are qualified and experienced to provide services for our communities. This bill mocks and dismisses the extensive knowledge of educators and librarians. Treating them as a criminal by charging them with a Class B Misdemeanor. My question is why? Why would you criminalize the educated and knowledgeable people who are doing a phenomenal job of helping build up the communities they serve?

Please excuse the length of my testimony, but I'm finding these bills to be troubling and feel they infringe on the rights and freedoms guaranteed to me and my community by the constitution. I have been a North Dakotan my whole life, and have always taken pride in being North Dakotan, we work hard, we take care of each other, and protect our freedoms. Now, I'm ashamed to be North Dakotan.

As a Librarian, I've always considered libraries a sanctuary. I've always had the interests and safety of the children/teens/adults who come to the library seeking a safe place for knowledge free of judgement and persecution at heart. Now, with these bills, you have created fear.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my story.

Sincerely,

Melissa Lloyd