

Thomas A. Starks  
March 14, 2023

Testimony in Opposition to SB2360

My wife and I, Laura and Thomas Starks, are in opposition to SB2360. As parents we acknowledge the importance of what is appropriate for our children. As owners of a book store, Lisbon Adventures, we are deeply troubled by the wording of this bill that would ban more books and content than people realize.

This bill is a direct violation of the 1<sup>st</sup> amendment. The government does not have the right to dictate and control ideas or education on a subject. Nor make decisions that are for parents, like myself, about when its appropriate to discuss or teach about sex education. While the bill attempts to safe guard that subject it also contradicts itself in the process. Leaving the decision to be arbitrarily enforced.

Majority of the books we sell are romance novels, which are written works that are not sold to minors, with out parental consent, that are rated with an 18+. To ban these books would directly hurt a small Mom and Pop business. We also host games for people of all ages for play table top gaming, card games, and board games, most of whom are minors. We provide a safe place for young people in our town to hang out, while also encouraging healthy outlets such as reading.

The fear instilled in a minority of people over “Lets talk about it” which is a sex education book, is not a just cause to use government to ban books and take away our right as parents and free thinking people from purchasing written art or education. This would encourage people to seek knowledge on the internet, and buy books using companies such as Amazon, which directly hurts and harms our small business. I understand the idea behind the bill, but it fails to capture the nuances of reality to force a narrow perspective. As a parent of two young kids and a book store owner, My wife and I are completely opposed to this bill SB2360 which would make us criminals for selling books.