

SB 2360

Members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Todd Beard, Senator from Williston District 23. I am here to speak in support of SB 2360.

The sexually explicit material available to our minor children in our schools and public libraries has become a major issue in our state. Let me be clear. This sexually explicit material is pornography. We have all seen the material we are trying to address here. It is pornography. Pornography available to children. Let me repeat. Pornography available to children. Why is it available? Very simply, because the people responsible for the material made available will not take responsibility. Some of the comments I have heard are "It's the parent's responsibility" or "this material may be needed for a child to discover who they are". Well, which is it. How can a parent that wants to keep their children safe do so if the school and public libraries do not take the responsibility to ensure the material is appropriate? If a reptile display was set up for children to participate in, I think most people would agree that would be a great experience. What if there was a rattlesnake on display, wouldn't you expect the person in charge of the display to protect all the children? Well, the pornographic materials currently in the libraries are a rattlesnake on display. Once a child visualizes pornographic material it can't be unseen. It can't be undone.

SB 2360 would send a clear message that school and public libraries have a responsibility to keep pornography out of the hands of children. And yet, nowhere in this bill do you find the word "ban". This bill does not ban anything as has been suggested by some. It just declares a responsibility.

I ask for a Do Pass vote on SB 2360.

Thank You

Senator Todd Beard