

February 14, 2023

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to urge you to oppose SB 2360. I am opposed to this bill for many reasons, but will address just one of my concerns in this testimony.

The bill says “material or a performance is obscene must be judged with reference to reasonable adults.” I am wondering how this judgement of who are “reasonable adults” will be made and by whom?

In 1928 all public libraries banned the classic story “The Wizard of Oz” because the book was argued “that the story was ungodly for depicting women in strong leadership roles.”

In 1957 the book caused controversy in Michigan and libraries banned the book on the basis that it had “no value” for children and supported “negativism.”

In 1986, the book was nearly banned in Tennessee because it depicted nice witches.

These cases that all refer to one book point out to me the wide range of judgements that “reasonable adults” can have. So, who decides?

Even “The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language” was banned in Alaska for its “objectionable” entries, particularly slang words including “bed,” “knocker,” and “balls.”

The list of books that have been banned in the past is long and includes many beloved classics and children’s books.

I believe I fit in the category of “reasonable adults” and I ask you to oppose this bill.

Thank you.

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