

I strongly oppose the SB 2123 and HB 1205.

These bills infringe on an individual's freedom to read and criminalize the work of Library employees. The First Amendment mandates the right of all people to free expression and the right to receive the constitutionally protected expression of others. Accordingly, the government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea itself offensive or disagreeable.

Parents---and only parents---have the right and responsibility to restrict the access of their children --and only their children---to library resources. In addition, censorship by librarians of constitutionally protected speech, whether for protection or for any other reason, violates the First Amendment.

Intellectual freedom is the right of every person to seek and receive information about any topic from multiple points of view. It includes the right to hold, receive, and share ideas and information. All people, of all ages have this right. If parents want to restrict certain materials from their children it is their responsibility to monitor them and the materials they check out.

A certain group of people want to impose censorship-the suppression of ideas or information because of a particular person or group of people do not like the "idea" in question. Censors believe that because they find a particular idea objectionable, no one should have access to information about that idea. They use political power to enforce censorship.

The Supreme Court ruled in the 1982 case "Island Tree School District" v. "Pico" that public school library books cannot be removed or restricted based on their current content, because such a removal would be a violation of the First Amendment rights of students. This can also be applied to libraries and children.

Please note, because libraries do not have infinite money or space, librarians have to make decisions about what materials to buy. Collection development is the process librarians use to make these decisions when they purchase materials for the library. Libraries have policies that provide guidelines for collection development and librarians who have a master's degree study collection development in graduate school. Librarians responsible for collection development consider how their choices affect the intellectual freedom of their communities when they select materials.

Please do not pass the Senate Bill 2123 or House Bill 1205!