

March 15, 2025

Chairman Klemin, members of the House Judiciary Committee, and all Representatives,

My name is Collin Pigeon. I am an educator in North Dakota and live in District 9 in Rolla, ND. This is currently my 8th year as an educator in Rolla and 9th overall. I teach Junior High English and High School Social Studies. I greatly enjoy working in our state as it has been my home all of my life.

I am writing this letter to you today concerning SB 2307. SB 2307 places new burdensome requirements and restrictions on libraries and the librarians that run them. It is legislation that is in search of a problem. Libraries, both school and public, already have procedures in place to ensure books are in the proper sections and material is appropriate for public consumption. Laws banning explicit content are already in our codes. Surely, we don't want to be a state with unnecessary legislation. That is not ND smart.

Reading is an integral part of our education system. It can be challenging in this day of technology to even get students to want to read. Students need access to a wide range of content, whether fiction or nonfiction. We do not want to incorrectly censor that content and prevent our young minds from being exposed to the vast array of knowledge books have to offer. If you research what books are most often censored, you will find many classics that I, and I assume many of you, were taught in schools. For example, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Books can contain violence, profane language, relationship content, and other content some may object to, but that is part of the world and free expression. It should be up to students, parents, teachers, and everyday North Dakotans to make that determination of what should be read without fear of legislation that would bring about censorship.

I believe very strongly in our 1st amendment, and I hope that censorship will not be something any of us see as part of ND's values. Lastly, I would note how impractical this is. Libraries do not have time to search every book and would likely have to discard perfectly good books in fear of them not being allowed. Keyword searches from technology will also not help one search through content either, as context is very important in determining the nature of content.

I would take note that if you look at the testimonies on this bill, you will find the vast majority of those in support are from out-of-state. I ask you to legislate on behalf of ND and vote No on this legislation. I appreciate your time and consideration. Please contact me with any questions or thoughts at Collin.Pigeon@gmail.com. Thanks for all you do to represent our state. Truly, as a Social Studies teacher, I know how thankless and important the job of a state legislature is.

Thank you,

Mr. Pigeon

Rolla, ND