

Good afternoon,

The following is my testimony in opposition to SB 2307.

First this bill is redundant, and a waste of tax payer time and funds. During the 2023 legislative session, House Bill 1205 created a clear definition of obscenity in state law. That law already ensures that libraries don't have illegal materials in their children's collections. This law also requires libraries to file a report yearly so the state can make sure they are complying. With a bill already in place addressing these issues the primary difference I find between the two is SB 2037 using a vague language that will allow greater censorship in the adult section of the library which brings me to my second point.

This bill would censor the adult section of the library. The vague language of this bill does not limit itself to the children's section of the library. As an adult I am more than capable of curating my library experience to my own tastes so I do not read anything I would find offensive to my senses and have faith that other adult library patrons are capable of doing the same.

In regards to child readers I also have faith that parents are more than capable of ensuring that their children do not read anything a reasonable person would find lacking in serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. I have faith that they are capable of this because I was raised by a single mother who worked full time and put in many hours of overtime. My mother was limited in the hours she could devote to reviewing the media her children consumed due to the number of long hard hours she worked and yet she still managed to find the time to ensure materials that were inappropriate or that she did not find in alignment to the beliefs was trying to raise her children by were not consumed by my sister or I. I would like it noted by the way that this was a feat because my mother raised two avid readers and it was not uncommon for my sister and I to finish multiple books in a week. If my mother, a woman whose free time to review the materials her children consumed by the simple fact of the number of hours she worked to support it could do it, I have faith that parents today are equally capable.

On that note I would like to circle back and address some of the language of SB2307. I find the language of this bill distressingly vague. Specifically the phrase "lacking in serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value." As a reasonable person, while researching to write this testimony I had to look up what literary value meant because I wanted to ensure that my understanding of the phrase was consistent with the intent of the writers of this bill and what I found is that the definition "literary value" is subjective at best, but for the sake of argument I am going to borrow the definition from NSW.gov and say it means written materials that have a "timeless and universal appeal" because it seems to align the most closely with the intent of this bill given the other categories that a book is expected to fall into, it feels like a reasonable catch all for books that do not have an obvious artistic, political, or scientific but can be recognized as valuable literature.

The problem is none of these categories protect popular books that are read simply for entertainment, for the enjoyment of reading and the joy of escaping into a story. They do not protect the adventures, the mystery's, or the love stories that while popular today, will not turn into timeless classics and do not hold a universal appeal. This bill fails to address that the vast majority books are consumed for entertainment, and that American tax payers, voters, your constituents, want to see popular books with an entertainment value in our libraries. As an avid reader I want to see Jim Butcher's the Dresden Files in libraries so I can check them out and read them. They are a popular and entertaining book, but they are not timeless, they do not hold a universal appeal, I have one friend in fact that despises the books, they are not particularly artistic, political, or scientific either, but it is a series that as a library patron I want to continue to see on library shelves.

This bill fails on multiple fronts. It's redundant nature is wasting tax payers time and money, it is stepping on the rights of parents to make decisions regarding what their children should and should not read, and it's vague wording fails to let libraries provide library patrons, taxpayers, and voters want to see in our libraries.

Thank you for your time.