

House Judiciary Committee
SB 2307
Elizabeth Anderson
March 17th, 2025

House Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding SB 2307. As an avid reader and a concerned citizen, I would like to present opposition to SB 2307. I have been reading the testimony in favor of the bill, and it all can be summarized to the extremes, “This bill prevents child exposure to pornography.” and “This bill prevents exposure to sexual material that “normalizes” sex to the point that children are more easily manipulated into trafficking situations”.

I have a deep concern for childhood exposure to pornography. I think it has devastating effects on the development and understanding of sexuality. Additionally, I have direct experience working with minor victims of human trafficking, having worked in a youth shelter for 4 years. Both of these things are direct threats to childhood well-being and development. However, this bill does NOT protect children from either of these things in any meaningful way. The real culprit? Internet access, but more specifically social media.

In my experience as a child therapist and shelter worker, social media and unsupervised internet access are the genuine factors in both of these issues. Children are accessing internet pornography, either accidentally via unintentional searches or accidentally viewing a pornographic post or ad. Sometimes, it is intentional searching for terms they have heard or questions they have. Additionally, social media platforms like Instagram or Snapchat are where predators meet vulnerable children and groom them for potential harm. In 2023, HB 1205 already took steps to prevent minor access to explicit sexual material in public libraries and requires that libraries create a review system that ensures children do not access developmentally inappropriate material. SB 2307 does not do more to protect children. What does the bill do? This bill would censor collections in the adult sections of libraries, limit access to educational resources and national collections, and criminalize the role of librarians.

HB 1205 already sets the standard for children’s sections. SB 2307 would expand that restriction to the whole library selection. This move would signal government overreach into adult access to literature. Adults are more than capable of discerning for themselves the content, stories, and perspectives they desire to consume. The language of this bill is vague. What is a “reasonable adult”? A Democrat would find a Republican unreasonable and vice

versa. A religious person would find an atheist unreasonable and vice versa. This language invites censorship of minority viewpoints and perspectives. Just because one adult disagrees with the content, does not mean that others should not have access.

Along that line, our public libraries have access to educational and literary collections from across the nation. If those collections do not meet the standards of the bill, will North Dakotans lose access to them? Will college students lose access to educational journals and research materials because they contain mentions of sex or sexuality? What about content that covers minority experiences, which some North Dakotans might find “morally offensive”? How can adults make educated decisions for themselves if they only have access to certain “nonoffensive” perspectives?

Finally, This bill makes the role and job of librarians a class B misdemeanor. By managing library collections, the discovery of any material reported to violate the standards of SB 2307, would constitute the criminal prosecution of the librarians because children have access to the library. We need qualified, educated professionals to manage our libraries and provide public access to literature. Who would desire to take the role if they could be criminally prosecuted simply for doing the job?

Please vote DO NOT PASS on SB 2307. It does not address real issues faced by childhood access to pornography and human trafficking; those arguments are a front for the erasure of minority experiences and perspectives and a limitation of adult literary autonomy. This bill is a censorship bill. It is a government overreach bill. Please stop this bill and spend time actually solving the problems this bill claims to care about.

Thank you,
Elizabeth Anderson