

Members of the House Judiciary,

My name is Jayda Borah and I live in Dickinson, North Dakota. I am writing to strongly oppose the passing of SB 2307 as it would be detrimental to North Dakota Libraries and their communities. It is completely unnecessary and would waste time and money. There are no sexually explicit materials in the children section of any library and libraries already have policies and procedures to protect children from accessing inappropriate materials. The Dickinson Area Public Library as well as most libraries in North Dakota are seeing a huge rise in library use and this bill would cause so many problems that I don't think people outside of the library profession realize.

Romance Novels, Harlequin novels, psychological thrillers, books about puberty, horror books and more would all have to be kept in a completely separate space from the children's section. This is a large chunk of adult materials. Also, with a very vague definition of "sexually explicit" many books will be pushed to be added to this restricted section based on people's personal beliefs. A lot of libraries in North Dakota do not have the space to have a completely separate section with these books, so many libraries would not be able to allow children in the library. If children are allowed in the library, parents will not be able to have their children with them while they are searching for books for themselves. Teenagers will not be able to check out books from the adult section. Library workers who are under 18 would not be able to work in the adult section. Many libraries rely on Highschool students to work evenings and Saturdays. Libraries would no longer be able to offer popular apps like Libby and Hoopla as there is no way to block materials for certain ages. The Dickinson Area Public Library hosts so many amazing programs for kids and family and would likely not be able to anymore if this bill passes. It would be a shame to eliminate a no cost option for families to entertain and/or educate their children.

This bill is censorship and would make it almost impossible for libraries to operate. The bill's definition of "explicit sexual materials" is very vague and would open the door for individuals to place their own standards and morals on library materials. A small group of people shouldn't be deciding what is appropriate to be in the public library based on their personal beliefs. Librarians need to be trusted to the job they were trained to do, not threatened with jail time and parents/guardians need to be responsible for what their children are accessing. Please, do not pass this bill. It will make a vital community resource much less accessible to those who need it.