

My name is Hilary Mehrer. I am a wife, mother of two adult children, former preschool teacher, small business owner, coordinator of our county food pantry and most recently a librarian. The library is a very large part of my life. I am not only a person who uses the library and the services it offers but I also get to see firsthand the people it serves.

One of the greatest things I get to see as a librarian is families using the library together. They start in the children's section picking out books and reading together. They may even pick out a DVD for family movie night. Then the adults move on to the fiction or mystery section of the library to choose their own books to enjoy. The children may be sitting at a table reading their new books or walking beside their parents asking them questions about what books they are going to check out. Please do not make this an impossible scenario because for many libraries in the state of North Dakota this bill would make that happen.

Story Time, STEM activities for elementary age children, the Summer Reading program. These are three popular programs we provide at the library. Programs that utilize our entire library as space is limited in the children's section. These would need to be cut as the vagueness of this bill instills fear by introducing the possibility of a Class B misdemeanor for librarians.

SB 2307 is a piece of legislation that is just not needed. Libraries already have an evaluative process used to choose their collections. That includes material for adults, teens and children which are appropriately categorized. Libraries also have a procedure so that patrons can object to materials they find offensive. Have any of you reached out to your local librarian to ask how many books have been challenged at the library you use?

This bill not only carries unknown legal burdens on our local libraries, it is also fiscally irresponsible to pass this bill. Small rural libraries do not have the funds to make physical changes to their building. They do not have the funds to provide age verification software for databases such as Libby. The limited budget libraries have is used for growing collections and maintaining and expanding programming.

I urge a Do Not Pass recommendation for SB 2307. Thank you.

Hilary Mehrer