



Testimony in Opposition to SB2307
Presented to the House Judiciary Committee
Prepared by Jenna Kahly, Library Director, West Fargo Public Library
Tuesday, March 18, 2025

1 Representative Klemin, Chair and members of the Judiciary Committee,

2 I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 2307. I have worked in libraries for 20
3 years in various roles at every level. What I've learned during that time is that every person who
4 enters a library has their own goals, values, and needs. We, as librarians, are doing our job well
5 when we connect people with the most appropriate information, media, and entertainment for
6 their unique situations.

7 Library workers take seriously our responsibility to protect and enrich the lives of children. We also
8 take seriously the responsibility of ensuring all members of our community have access to a
9 comprehensive collection of materials, resources, and opportunities that help them achieve
10 their goals, strengthen our communities, and promote lifelong learning.

11 In recent years, our library has seen significant growth in usage, with more people using
12 traditional library services than ever before. Circulation has increased more than 61% since 2019.
13 In 2024, nearly 70% of our circulation was of traditional physical library materials checked out
14 from our building.

15 Our residents trust and love their librarians and place value on access to knowledge, literacy
16 programs, and the public services that our library provides. We do our job well.

17 The West Fargo Public Library has robust policies and procedures in place to ensure materials in
18 our popular collection are carefully curated, appropriate for our library, and placed in the
19 proper collection.

20 Before an item is placed in our collection, it goes through multiple levels of review by our team
21 of professionals following professional standards and our Collection Management Policy.
22 Materials are regularly reviewed while they are in our collection, as they are checked in and
23 during our weeding process.

24 Our robust policies and procedures include a formal request for reconsideration process. In the
25 last 8+ years, we have not received a single request for reconsideration voicing opposition to an
26 item from our residents or library users. Our patrons have confidence in our staff and collection
27 management processes. They continue to use the library more than ever before. Our policies
28 and procedures are working as written.

29 This legislation would impose unnecessary barriers and financial implications for libraries like West
30 Fargo Public Library, which already have policies in place for collection management and are
31 doing our job well. Changes would cause significant and costly burdens on our library, added
32 barriers for residents, unnecessary structural changes to our humble facility, and limitations on
33 resources available to our growing patron base.

34 To comply with the bill as written, all youth and adult materials must be physically separated to
35 ensure adult materials are “not easily accessible to minors.” Because of the layout of our library,
36 we would need to create physical barriers and reroute traffic in our library. Doing this in our
37 library would result in:

- 38 • At least a 25% reduction in non-youth materials to move our Large Print, Audiobook, and
39 DVD collections upstairs
- 40 • Significant costs to create a physical barrier to stop kids from being able to have access
41 to the stairs (\$8000 per estimate from YHR)
- 42 • Youth being denied access to upstairs, which means no youth programs will be
43 permitted in our meeting rooms, resulting in reduction of program offerings

44 Implementing this bill would create a domino effect of issues with accessibility for patrons,
45 especially elderly patrons, those with mobility issues, and families.

- 46 • To ensure children cannot go upstairs using our elevator, it would need to be operated
47 by staff key access only, which means adults with mobility issues needing to get upstairs
48 will require a staff person to accompany them.
- 49 • Children and families may not have access to a restroom when visiting the library, as our
50 primary restrooms are upstairs. Downstairs restroom access could be lost at any time, as
51 those bathrooms are not part of the library’s lease and belong to the school.
- 52 • Parents will no longer be able to have their child with them when browsing the adult
53 collection. This is unsafe and a violation of our unattended child policy.

54 The bill's language would require significant investment in changes to electronic resources or
55 would prevent us from offering them at all.

- 56 • A recent quote to provide age verification to some of our databases like
57 Libby/Overdrive would cost \$4500 just for the first year, with annual subscription costs
58 increasing overtime.
- 59 • Significant cost of the required age-verification software to continue offering
60 Libby/OverDrive would result in the reduction of other library services and funds for
61 programs like our Summer Reading Program for children.

62 In conclusion, the West Fargo Public Library is an example of one of hundreds of North Dakota
63 libraries that already implement strong policies and are trusted by taxpayers but would greatly
64 suffer if this bill was enacted.

65 As a Library Director and a mother, I firmly believe that this bill would not enhance child
66 protection but would instead create unnecessary barriers to access, eliminate essential library
67 services, and disrupt the very structure that makes the local library a welcoming place for all.

68 I urge a Do Not Pass on this bill. Please allow libraries to continue serving our communities
69 effectively and efficiently, as we currently do. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Jenna Kahly, Library Director

West Fargo Public Library