

Testimony in Support of SB 2307

House Judiciary Committee

March 18, 2025

Chairman Klemin and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Brittany Boehm and I am here to briefly share some relevant information regarding the American Library Association, the “ALA”.

The ALA has a list of Top 10 Most Challenged Books. The books on the 2023 list have been challenged because they contain sexually explicit graphics and/or language, profanity, violence, LGBTQIA+ material, depictions of rape and incest, and drug use. These books are widely available in public libraries and schools across ND (see attached). The ALA promotes these books during a “Banned Books Week” where they spotlight the books and promote activities and ways for people to get involved to keep them accessible.[1]

Two examples of these books are Let’s Talk About It by Erika Moen & Matthew Nolan (targeting children ages 14 and up) and Sex is a Funny Word by Cory Silverberg (not on the list, but a very similar book available in ND libraries and targeting children ages 8-11). These books contain graphic images and language normalizing STIs and sexting, encouraging and teaching sexual behaviors, and likening pornography to a “fun, sugary treat” (LTAI p.165).

The ALA is not interested in protecting children. A statement on their website says, “The ALA stringently and unequivocally maintains that libraries and librarians have an obligation to resist efforts that systematically exclude materials dealing with any subject matter, including sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation”. [2] Another states, “The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users”. [3]

The ALA is not a friend of parents either. As stated in an article from Daily Citizen [4], “instead of taking parents’ concerns seriously, the organization’s Office for Intellectual Freedom has advice

for librarians about how to fight back against parents who believe certain books might be inappropriate for children.[5] It dramatically labels parents' involvement as “censorship” and “book banning.” The ALA believes children should be able to check out whatever books they want and that they deserve “privacy and confidentiality”- including from parents - in those decisions.[6]

Thank you for your time, and please give this bill a Do Pass recommendation.

Brittany Boehm

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[1] [Banned Books Week | Banned Books](https://www.ala.org/bbooks/banned) <https://www.ala.org/bbooks/banned>

[2] [Access to Library Resources and Services | ALA](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/access) <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/access>

[3] [Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights | ALA](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/minors) <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/minors>

[4] [American Library Association Chooses Marxist Lesbian as President-Elect - Daily Citizen](https://dailycitizen.focusonthefamily.com/american-library-association-chooses-marxist-lesbian-as-president-elect/)
<https://dailycitizen.focusonthefamily.com/american-library-association-chooses-marxist-lesbian-as-president-elect/>

[5] [How to Respond to Challenges and Concerns about Library Resources | ALA](https://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport/respond)
<https://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport/respond>

[6] [Library Bill of Rights | ALA](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill) <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

Top 10 Most Challenged Books of 2023

1. *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe

Available in:

Grand Forks Public Library
North Dakota State Library
Fargo Public Library
Minot Public Library
Dickinson Public Library

2. *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson

Available in:

Dickinson High School Library
Grand Forks Public Library
McKenzie County Public Library
Bismarck Public Library
Minot Public Library

3. *This Book is Gay* by Juno Dawson

Available in:

Leach Public Library
Fargo Public Library
Minot Public Library
Bismarck Public Library

4. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky

Available in:

West Fargo Public Library
Bismarck Public Library
Mandan Public Library
Minot Public Library
Dickinson High School Library
Hatton Public School Library
Hope School Library
Larimore High School Library
Midway High School Library
North Dakota Youth Correctional Library
Iris Swedlund School and Public Library of Velva

5. *Flamer* by Mike Curato

Available in:

West Fargo Public Library
Dickinson Area Public Library
Dickinson High School Library

Minot Public Library
Leach Public Library

6. *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison

Available in:

West Fargo Public Library
North Dakota State Library
Harvey Public Library
Grafton High School Library
Dickinson Area Public Library
Cavalier School Library
Minot Public Library
Beulah Public Library
Washburn Public Library

7. *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl* by Jesse Andrews

Available in:

Dickinson Area Public Library
West Fargo Public Library
Minot Public Library
Morton Mandan Public Library
McLean-Mercer Regional Library-Riverdale
Underwood Public Library
New Salem High School
Turtle Lake-Mercer School Library
Grand Forks Public Library
Larimore High School Library
Midway High School Library
North Dakota Youth Correctional Library

8. *Tricks* by Ellen Hopkins

Available in:

Minot Public Library
Center Oliver Library
Dickinson Area Public Library
Finley-Sharon School Library
Grafton High School Library
Grand Forks Public Library
Hope School Library
Leach Public Library
Midway High School Library
North Border-Pembina School and City Library
North Border-Walhalla School Library
North Dakota State Hospital-Health Sciences Library

North Dakota Youth Correctional Library
Northwood School Library
Iris Swedlund School and Public Library of Velva

9. *Let's Talk About It* by Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan

Available in:

Dickinson Area Public Library
Grand Forks Public Library
West Fargo Public Library
Minot Public Library

10. *Sold* by Patricia McCormick

Available in:

Fargo Public Library
Minot Public Library
United Tribes Technical College Library
Saint Mary's Central High School
Beulah High School Library
Theodore Jamerson Elementary School
New Salem High School
Turtle Lake-Mercer School Library