

## Written Testimony Opposing SB 2307

I am a resident of Medora and the Billings County representative on the Board of the Dickinson Area Public Library. This bill is very concerning and should not pass.

Public libraries are a community resource and should be welcoming to community members. The Dickinson Area Public Library saw 76,695 patrons visit in 2024, and increase of over 6,000 from 2023 and saw over 10,000 more children's materials circulate in that same time frame while having 0 requests for reconsideration. This shows that the library is fulfilling its purpose and the librarians are correctly following established policy and selecting beneficial materials to add to the collection.

There are multiple instances within this bill where the wording is vague and is left open to interpretation; for instance, "the reasonable person" is referenced in Section 1 but fails to specify who is considered reasonable and allows for subjective interpretation. Librarians have gone through specialized higher education and training in order to obtain their jobs and they also have criteria to follow to allow new publications to enter the library without allowing their personal opinions to influence decisions. This bill accuses those respected professionals of not having the knowledge to be able do their jobs.

Section 7 refers to "any interested individual" which again, is extremely vague, insinuating that anyone, regardless of what state they reside in, can request the State's Attorney to spend time and money reviewing materials.

It should be the responsibility of parents, not the state government, to supervise and be aware of what their children read. If they have objections to currently available material, they should follow the library's reconsideration request policy. This ensures dialogue is held at the local level and leaves room for education or explanation in the event of confusion or misunderstandings. This also encourages dialogue and rapport between patrons and their local librarians.

Public libraries already have policies and measures in place for any patrons with concerns about library materials. The policies have been designed with the understanding that there is not a one-size-fits all rule and that each case needs to be looked at independently and thoughtfully. It is also worth mentioning that sexually explicit materials are already prohibited in children's collections per NDCC 12.1-27.1-03.5.

In conclusion, library collections should be overseen at the local level and primarily by the trained library professionals who have a more nuanced

understanding of the contents of their library, without fear of criminal penalties or prosecution.

I urge you to oppose this bill as it is overreaching, unnecessary, and vague in its wording.

Thank you for your time,

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