

Hello Chairman Klemin and members of the House Judiciary Committee.

My name is Patrick Hanson, I'm 28 and am a North Dakota citizen that lives in Bismarck. And I would like to testify in favor of SB 2307 today. Thank you for the opportunity to be heard and I hope my words will be helpful to you in making the right choice on this matter.

The main point of my testimony today is this that there is a false premise in the conversation about this topic of banning obscenity in our public square that is often claimed and accepted, and that is the idea that with this bill would supposedly "infringe on free speech."

This is not so. Please allow me to explain why.

We would never allow people to do obscene things such as sexual acts in broad daylight in our public square would we? Of course not, those kinds of things are illegal as they should be.

Would it be any different to ban an image of that same obscene sexual behavior on a billboard to be seen by all in public? No, it wouldn't because even though it is an image, and some may argue that the image itself is a protected expression of speech, that display should still not be allowed because it is not the speech that should make it illegal, it is the behavior that is committed, that we all know is obscene that should be illegal to show in public.

What about in books in our public libraries instead of billboards? That is still in the public square, so shouldn't obscene acts and behavior be banned in those public square spaces too?

This issue has long been falsely labeled a speech issue when it has really always been an issue of obscene behavior in public.

Just because the depiction of people committing obscene sexual acts through images technically involves speech, doesn't mean that the banning of that obscenity is the banning of speech. Otherwise that same logic could be used to justify the allowance of someone posting a video of them abusing or even murdering someone else for example.

No one actually thinks that banning the posting of that particular kind of video example would be banning speech right? No, we all know that it is the **act** of what they've done in that video that is illegal not the mere uploading of some video that is.

And the sharing/showing of that content online is an obscene act and is illegal behavior too. The images/information/data are just the medium of which those obscene **acts** can be displayed, and unfortunately also reviewed over and over again.

There is content in our libraries that is obscene, especially sexually explicit material that is not suitable for anyone. Not for children. Not for adults. **Pornographic material is not speech or artistic expression**, it is an act and/or acts that are depicted through images and other information. **That material is obscene behavior**. Why would we allow this to be accessed in books in any library?

The summary of my testimony is this:

Freedom of speech is a good thing, and ought to be protected.

Doing obscene things in public is bad, and should not be allowed.

And ***protecting free speech and restricting public obscenity are not in conflict with each other*** at all because it is the acts that we are banning, not the medium of portrayal of which they are displayed that are the issue at hand.

Here are some questions I would like to leave you with:

What kind of acts are okay to do in public?

What kind of acts are okay to show others publicly?

How much longer will we expose our children to obscenity in our public square spaces?

Thank you again Chairman Klemin and honorable members of the committee for for listening to my testimony today, I pray that you have wisdom and make the right choice for our great state of North Dakota and our current and future generations!

I am open to any comments, questions and concerns that you have, I've emailed you my contact info and I ask that you please feel free to reach me anytime! :)

Sincerely, from a citizen that cares about the thriving, flourishing and well being of the society I live in.

-Patrick Hanson

Jeremiah 29:7