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February 7, 2025

Chairman Larson, Vice Chairman Paulson, and members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Maddie Cummings, and I am the Library Director of the Lake Region Public Library (LRPL) in Devils Lake, North Dakota. I am writing today to express my opposition for SB 2307, a bill that would drastically affect the positive impact the Lake Region Public Library has on the daily lives of youth in Devils Lake, Ramsey County, and beyond.

The Lake Region Public Library is a city-county library, serving both Devils Lake and Ramsey County. In 2024 compared to 2023, visits to the library increased by more than the entire population of Devils Lake- nearly 7,500. We offered 232 programs with over 5,000 attendees, with well over 3,500 of said attendees being youths 18 and under. Library usage continues to rise with the information and resources public libraries provide, and we at LRPL are proud to continually listen to our patrons and communities to offer the collection, programs, and services needed in order to promote this increased usage.

SB 2307 is unnecessary, as every public library already has a policy in place to review and reconsider materials considered inappropriate by any person at any time. SB 2307 will essentially bar anyone under the age of 18 from using the Lake Region Public Library, as it will either force us to cut our collection in half in order to comply with the language since we cannot physically or financially sequester the tens of thousands of items containing the words deemed "obscene," or more realistically, it will force us to close our doors to children and only allow adults to procure materials for them. The 232 programs offered in 2024 will drop to double digits, as more than 150 of these programs were geared towards children. SB 2307 is not a bill for North Dakota libraries. Please, stand with North Dakota libraries and librarians and oppose SB 2307.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maddie Cummings".

Maddie Cummings
Library Director