

SB 2307

I urge you to recommend a **do not** pass for SB 2307. Libraries grow curiosity, develop a love of learning, and bring people together. Librarians are not criminals by supporting intellectual freedom. Knowledge is power and access to information is empowering. This bill will unnecessarily restrict more access than it is intending to restrict, by creating barriers to online resources and physical libraries. Possibly children would have to be turned away from the rural libraries without the funds to create a separate area for different aged library users. Our state is very rural and library funds and tax dollars should go to access more information not restrict information. The similar bill was vetoed in 2023 by Doug Burgum because it would have been an enormous burden on public libraries.

Living in an information abundant world with access at our fingertips ND libraries are experiencing increasing usage including visitors, card holders, and program attendees. Libraries provide free accessible information and resources allowing citizens to learn, research and stay informed. A library is a vital center for people to gather, connect and participate regardless of their financial wellness. This bill only pertains to a small amount of information that has been already required by other laws in North Dakota to be removed from areas for minors. Librarians across the state have training on where to place items in their libraries. All libraries have established policies and procedures that make this bill irrelevant.

Access for all users to databases, E-books, informationally books, and even to some physical libraries will cut out users of the library to comply with this bill. This will restrict access to online databases that I used constantly during my undergrad and graduate studies and still from time to time use for my own personal interests. According to the North Dakota State Library and Online Dakota Information Network these restrictions will create parameters to sign in. This will limit student access to online databases, databases designed for students that I use in the classroom for research, and our neighbors use to home school their children. The students love using these databases, they get excited about their own ownership of learning. These databases create an online space without advertisements and external links. Online databases are accessed through our ND state library, no cost to schools, no cost to ND residents that hold a library card.

With wording including school district, how does that affect health and science curriculum and textbooks? This bill can be interpreted to remove books that provide wellness and medical information on how bodies work, health is the whole body, not just what you can see over clothing. Within the bill it's not clear who would decide what constitutes sexually explicit material, it could mean something different to everyone.

I urge you to stand with North Dakota libraries and the access to information by opposing SB 2307.

-Robin Holt
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