

## Testimony in opposition to SB2307

I want to voice my strong opposition to this library censorship bill. A similar bill was brought during the last legislative session and defeated. I'm feeling like I'm living in the movie Groundhog Day as I see previously defeated bills being brought back again and again. The legislature exists to implement the will of the people, not try and try again to stand against them.

This bill is bad for the same reasons as last time:

- All public libraries in the state have **policies and procedures in place that make this bill irrelevant.**
- Library numbers across the state are RISING. Meaning MORE visitors, MORE library cards, MORE program attendance. If the majority of community members were concerned with what is in the library, would this be the case?
- The bill is stating any material deemed "sexually explicit" (harlequin romances, various romance novels, psychological thrillers, books about puberty, etc) must not be in ANY AREA of the library where minors (ages 17 & under) could POSSIBLY be in. Yes, this would also include online databases (aka Libby) This would mean **libraries would have to build walls** to create separate rooms OR **not allow children into the library.**
- Many **small-town libraries do not have the space or money** to create separate rooms for "offensive" books.
- If they can't build the separate rooms:
  - Grownups want to browse the shelves for your next great read while your kiddo is in the stroller? NOPE
  - Anyone under the age of 18 wants to work at the library shelving books? (these kids usually are how libraries can be open during nights and weekends) NOPE
  - Kids need to print their book report or be able to use the computers that already have filters on them? NOPE
  - Want your child to enjoy free audiobooks and eBooks with their library card? NOPE
  - Want children ages 17 & under to have access the library? NOPE
- **The bill would criminalize librarians.** Librarians who display books with nudity on the cover would receive a Class B misdemeanor. Even shirtless men on the cover of romance novels would be a violation of the law if the bill passed.
- **The bill is state government overreach.** The state attorney general would be required to review complaints from individuals about materials in our local libraries and could decide to withhold funding as punishment for not complying. This is censorship, plain and simple. Who decides what is offensive content? History has never, ever favored the book banners.

Sincerely

Alex Deufel District 40