

February 9, 2025

Dear Representatives,

I come to you as a citizen of the state of North Dakota who firmly believes in the right to read, as well as letting parents actually parent their children.

I am writing in strong opposition to SB 2307.

In the 2023 legislative session, we had a bill that required all “sexually explicit” library materials to be removed from children’s areas. In the entire state, less than a dozen books were actually relocated. This is not because libraries did not go through their collections; it is because this is not nearly as big of the problem as it was framed to be.

SB 2307 requires that all “obscene” materials, that minors can access, be taken out. Most public libraries do not have four walls that separate their children’s or teen areas from the adult sections, let alone entirely different entrances into the libraries. If this bill were to go through, one of two things would happen. Either public libraries would need to basically gut their fiction and historical areas, or minors wouldn’t even be allowed in the buildings. Some might be able to build walls, but that will be a luxury for few.

As far as digital collections are concerned, the tools are not there to be able to fully monitor what minors can and cannot access. Which means that all the adult patrons, who love Libby, lose a lot of their e-book and e-audiobook options. Libraries would also lose access to a lot of databases, simply because the contents cannot be that closely controlled.

What children read, especially if they are taking it from the adult section of the library, really should be a parenting choice, not a government choice. One of the best things about libraries are that if a book is not a good fit for you, you can just return it. It might be an excellent fit for someone else.

Sincerely,

Tammy Kruger