

February 9, 2025

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Request: Oppose SB 2307

Chairperson Larson and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

For the record my name is Christine Kujawa, Library Director at Bismarck Veterans Memorial Public Library (BVMPL) and lifelong citizen of North Dakota. I **oppose Senate Bill 2307**.

BVMPL, along with all ND public libraries, **are already in compliance with HB 1205**, which passed during the 68th Legislative Assembly **to address your concerns**.

Senator Keith Boehm was quoted in an [article](#) saying, “A simple cabinet that would hold 200 books would suffice in most circumstances.” Senator Kent Weston [said](#) he doesn’t “think it’s unreasonable to ask that things be put away.” To be clear, the bill as written does not state that citizens may *ask* librarians to place items in locked cabinets out of public view. Citizens will *tell* librarians to do this, and librarians will face **criminal charges** and **loss of state funding** if they don’t follow through.

Similar laws with the same required actions are happening in other states and citizens are **successfully challenging constitutionality through litigation**.

For example, in 2024 an Arkansas judge [ruled](#) that this very action of “putting away” material:

1. “Restrains public libraries and booksellers from making available constitutionally protected books and other materials to their patrons and customers, which burdens the rights of those individuals to read and to receive information.”
2. “Violates the First and Fourteenth Amendments because it imposes a content-based **restriction on speech**.”
3. “Violates the First and Fourteenth Amendments by relying on vague and undefined terms that **permit arbitrary implementation**.”
4. The judge ruled the law **unconstitutional** and permanently barred the defendants from implementing or enforcing these provisions in the future.

Knowingly passing laws that are successfully being challenged in court as unconstitutional and unlawful in other states would be imprudent and costly for the State of ND and its taxpayers.

On a federal level, in 2025 President Trump [stated](#), “Government censorship of speech is intolerable in a free society.”

On a state level, in 2023 former ND Governor Burgum [stated](#), “America is built on a foundation of freedom of speech, the free exchange of ideas and the freedom from government interference to read - or not to read - books...”

On a local level, BVMPL received only two reconsideration requests in 2024, which represents only .00011% of our collection and .004% of our cardholders.

Leadership on federal and state levels support the freedom of speech, which applies to both verbal and written word, as does our local community. I respectfully request that the ND Legislature do the same.

Please vote “DO NOT PASS” on SB 2307.

Sincerely,
Christine Kujawa, MS, MM
Library Director, Bismarck Veterans Memorial Public Library