

Senate Judiciary Committee
SB 2307
February 10, 2025

Chair Larson, Vice Chair Paulson, and members of the Committee,
My name is Blaise Balas. I am a high school student, and long-time resident of North Dakota. I am here today to express my strong opposition to SB 2307, which seeks to impose restrictive measures on the materials available in our libraries.

SB 2307 represents an alarming overreach of state authority by allowing the attorney general to withhold funding from libraries based on complaints about materials. This threatens local control and the ability of communities to make decisions that reflect their values and needs. Rather than promoting literacy and critical thinking, this bill seeks to limit access to information and punish those who work to ensure it remains available. Furthermore, the bill disproportionately impacts rural communities, where libraries often operate with limited space and resources. Requiring segregation or restriction of materials would be logistically unfeasible and could result in a loss of access to important educational and literary content.

And lastly, SB 2307 criminalizes library professionals for simply doing their jobs, creating a chilling effect that would lead to self-censorship and limit the ability of librarians to serve their communities effectively.

For these reasons, I urge you to reject SB 2307 and uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and local governance. Our libraries should be places of learning, exploration, and inclusivity, not censorship and fear. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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