

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Kimberly Hurst and I reside in District 1. I am asking that you please render a Do Pass on Senate Bill 2307. As a parent of four children who have attended the public school system, I expect the state of North Dakota to create and enforce century code to protect the innocence and well-being of young minds. The materials I have discovered on the shelves of WBSD#7 libraries are highly inappropriate for children, to say the least. For example, one book our school district has displayed to minors is about a father molesting his daughter in extreme and graphic detail. Under what circumstances would this be considered 'educational'? This is just one of many other inappropriate books that were found.

The distinction between hosting sexually explicit material on a school library shelf and what could be considered grooming of young minds is becoming increasingly blurred. In such cases my school district, WBSD#7, enforces a book review policy that can take up to a year to complete, rather than promptly assessing the concerning content and making an immediate decision regarding the removal of pornographic material. This raises serious concerns about the district's commitment to protecting our children. This is not merely a matter of implementing preventative measures—it is a pressing reality that students are being exposed to inappropriate material.

As any concerned parent would, you might ask, where did these books come from and how did they end up on the shelves? This is where the lack of due

diligence with using third parties also fails to protect the children from sexually explicit material in public schools. A well used third party, the American Library Association is widely used not only in North Dakota public libraries but also in public school libraries. ALA's previous president, Emily Darbinski, campaigned on the slogan, *"Equity as action, Social and economic justice and racial equity requires that we make a material difference in the lives of library workers and patrons who have for far too long been denied power and opportunity on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, national origin, spoken language, and disability."* Darbinski said that she would *"advance a public agenda that puts organization for justice at the center of library work"*. Ms. Darbinski, who has publicly identified as a Marxist, emphasized during her campaign her intent to influence libraries affiliated with the ALA through her ideological perspectives.

There appears to be a consistent focus on anti racism and DEI initiatives among ALA presidents. The now current and incoming president of the ALA, Cindy Hohl, has outlined one of her presidential initiatives as follows: *"A comprehensive library guide will focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, social justice, and antiracism practices in libraries, highlighting welcoming spaces, belonging for all, and sustainability for future generations of library staff and users."*

If I am not mistaken, North Dakota's century code prohibits the teaching of critical race theory. Given this, why are we allowing third-party agendas to influence our schools in a manner that may violate state law? The existing legislation lacks the necessary detail to effectively protect children from external

ideological influences that may not align with our state's standards or Article VIII of the North Dakota Constitution. More concerning, there is currently no penalty for violating this law. In addition, the current President of The United States has recently signed an executive order prohibiting any DEI and CRT material in schools. As lawmakers of North Dakota, I urge you to consider whether our state will uphold this directive or choose to disregard it.

I strongly urge you to support the passage of Senate Bill 2307. Thank you for your time, your consideration of this critical issue, and for your service to the state of North Dakota.

Kimberly Hurst