

March 14th, 2023

This testimony is in opposition to SB 2360. I urge you to vote DO NOT PASS.

Reading allows people to expand their mind. It allows people to learn new things about cultures and beliefs that are vastly different from their own. We have TVs/computers/tablets/phones that can do similar things, but reading allows for an entirely different experience. When reading, you are required to use your imagination to picture the places and events. The screens do that for you and remove any need for imagination. Reading pushes the reader to create the image they want. What one person envisions while reading a book can be very different from the next person reading that same book.

The fact is, I don't read as often as I should. My wife encourages me to read more. My wife and I will often read books together and enjoy them, but there are times she might want to read a book that I don't have an interest in, or vice versa. Imagine deciding you wanted to read a book but because your significant other didn't like what was in it, it was banned from your household. Maybe my spouse likes doing a certain craft, but I don't have an interest in it. Should I ban it from being done in our home?

I have a 100-year-old grandmother. There isn't a lot that she finds much interest in anymore at this point in her life, but she still enjoys reading. The particular topic of books she usually enjoys reading is romance novels. A lot of senior citizens are on fixed incomes and can't afford buying everything they want to read from a bookstore or online, so they are limited to what their local libraries have in stock. If this bill goes through, many books they might find enjoyment in reading will no longer be available to them.

This bill is focused on children, but it is not only children who would be affected by it. Everyone will be. Parents are entrusted to monitor what their children watch on TV and what movies they can go to at the theaters. Why would our government suddenly think they can't be trusted to monitor what their children are reading? It does not make logical sense to pass this bill.

This bill is also restricting tools that parents can use to teach their children about events in life, how some people have different views and beliefs and how to treat others. We can't limit others (adults and children) to specific views/beliefs just because we might not like the others that are out there.

This bill will undo a lot of work people have done over the last century to get us to a place that is open and allowing people to choose what is best for them. Not having others dictate what is best for them.

Please vote DO NOT PASS on SB 2360.

Respectfully,

Derek Bjornstad