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March 14, 2023

Honorable Chairman Klemin  
RE: Testimony on SB2360

Dear Chairman Klemin and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am providing this personal testimony in opposition to HB2360. My name is Mindy Iverson and I am a concerned parent from the Bismarck community. I have two children, one in middle school and one in high school. I believe it is the parents' right and responsibility to monitor what their child is reading and not the state's position to determine what should or should not be in a library collection.

Passing this bill will have major implications on our children. In a society that already struggles with mental health, we will be pushing children over the edge who are grappling with their identity, physical and sexual abuse. I ask you to self reflect, what if you went to a space that eliminated everything that represented you. A library is a safe space for these students and the material in it should represent everyone, not one person's agenda.

I encourage you and parents to look at your district's criteria for book selection and reconsideration. You will find they have policies and procedures in place. Community members need to follow the process and take the appropriate action steps if they have an issue with materials in our school libraries.

My next concern is the targeting of educational databases. Databases are vetted and reliable resources only accessible when purchased by districts or the state library. I also worry about the repercussions this will have on smaller towns in our state. Many of them rely heavily on the state funded databases and do not have the financial means to purchase them on their own. Additionally, students of North Dakota will not be prepared for college as it is required to have peer reviewed articles when writing essays, thesis, and action research papers at advanced levels. These articles are only found in the databases! Imposing this bill will drive teachers away from requiring this resource and push students to use the open internet more, which will ultimately increase their exposure to uncensored material.

I oppose this bill and ask you to give a 'do not pass' recommendation.

Sincerely,

Mindy M. Iverson