

Opposition Testimony to HB 1205

I am writing in opposition to HB 1205. As history has shown us, those who seek to ban books do not end up on the right side of history. Removing books that are defined as inappropriate for certain audiences (like children) are going against the basic role of libraries- to provide access to a wide variety of resources for patrons to learn, explore, wonder, and research. I also wonder who gets to define what is inappropriate or sexually explicit? I believe providing age appropriate resources are critical for youth who are learning about themselves and the world around them.

In addition, this bill places an unreasonable burden on libraries. Many likely do not have the staff or time to perform the review of their entire collections to meet this requirement. And it is unnecessary. We hire professional librarians to use their expertise in providing diverse and appropriate resources. Libraries have board that also provide input and oversight. Passing this bill sets a precedent for the future that we do not want in North Dakota. Please vote do not pass and keep our libraries safe and open resources for all.

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