Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Alexis Whitehorn. I am many things. I am a citizen of the United States and a resident of Bismarck, North Dakota. I am a Master's degree holder in Educational Leadership and a bachelor's degree holder in English. I am an educator, a mentor, a daughter, a sister, and my favorite - a mom.

I am also a widow. So when my son started asking questions that should have been answered by his father, I turned to the thing that taught me about life - books.

This book - the one that has caused the most uproar in this session, was my go-to resource. When the book arrived, my son and I sat down and read it together. It is because of this book that I was able to have a conversation about our human bodies and its functions. We talked about what and how it might look for other people and how **people believe different things**. We talked about the values we have as a family and how others might not view sex and reproductive rights the same as we do. We also talked about how important it is to respect the rights of others.

This bill started because a few people found that book in their library and because of their values as an individual person, viewed it as "obscene." There is a simple solution to this that doesn't need a bill to rectify it. If you find the book obscene, DON'T CHECK IT OUT. It's that simple. You don't want your child to have access to it? GO WITH YOUR CHILD TO THE LIBRARY.

This bill is infringing on the first amendment rights of North Dakota citizens. North Dakotans deserve the right to check out any book that suits their interest and needs. It is not the government's job to tell us what we can and cannot read. Period. Other people's belief systems do not get to dictate what is in our local and public libraries. This bill is a gross overreach of government control and separation of church and state.

I urge you to allow people to use their own belief and value system to make their own decisions. VOTE DO NOT PASSfor HB 1205.

Thank you,
Alexis Whitehorn
Bismarck, ND