

My name is Rachel Kercher and I am the Youth Services Librarian at the Leach Public Library in Wahpeton. I have worked in North Dakota libraries for over fourteen years, and have spent the past ten years at the Leach Library serving library users and community members aged 0-18 years old and their families. I am writing to you today in opposition of SB 2123.

Section 1.1 of this bill states that if this bill passes it will be unlawful to display any “book, paperback book, pamphlet, or magazine, the exposed cover or available content of which exploits, is devoted to, or contains depictions or written descriptions of nude or partially denuded human figures”. This can be applied to any book or magazine within my library’s collection regardless of the title’s intended audience. This can include books on toilet training, books on puberty or any book that includes information on anatomy and physiology. This can include books on consent and body autonomy that help teach small children that their body is their own. This bill can include books geared to the adult survivors of rape and sexual abuse. This can also include the Bible for containing verses such as “and they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed” and “let her breasts satisfy thee at all times” (Genesis 2:25; Proverbs 5:19).

While SB2123 has potential to keep explicit materials from minors in a public library setting, it does so at the expense of all library users. There are lasting consequences of passing this bill that will infringe on the rights of all North Dakotans.