

To Whom It May Concern,

I urge you to please oppose SB 2123. If it passes into law, I'm afraid it would be considered unconstitutional. The Supreme Court has decided many times over the years--particularly in the case of *Island Trees School District v. Pico* (1982)-- that students retain their First Amendment rights while in school and that neither the government nor school officials can restrict students' access to books. According to the Supreme Court, The First Amendment is implied to grant us freedom to choose what to read or not. No form of government can make that choice for us. If you believe that students should not read a certain book, it's not up to a government or school official to decide that, but rather their parents.

Let parents decide what their children may or may not read. If they are okay with their teenage children looking up answers to questions about safe sex, consent, and dealing with jealousy in a factual book intended for teenagers, that is supposed to be their decision.

I am concerned about this bill on a personal level. As a librarian at a rural public school, I need to provide books for all students in grades K-12. My library is basically one large room divided into two areas of books: one for elementary and the other for high school. I make it clear which books the little kids can check out. I don't think I should be faced with a fine, a class B misdemeanor or both just for having kids in the library during book checkout, when they just happen to be in the same room as books intended for middle and high school students, even if those books contain elements some people may consider inappropriate. They may never even open those books at all. There are many librarians at other rural K-12 schools in our state that I'm sure would be faced with this same problem. I suppose a solution would be to move the middle and high school books to a separate room, but rural schools only have so much space and so many resources to make that work.

Again, I urge you to oppose SB 2123 because it would take away students' right to read, and it would take away parents' rights to say what their children can read. It may also cause some unnecessary strife in all rural schools in our state.

Sincerely,

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