

March 8, 2025

Dear Chairperson and Members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Anita Tulp, and I am the Director of the Valley City Barnes County Library. I am writing to you in opposition to SB 2278 and sincerely ask for a vote of "Do Not Pass."

I believe this bill if passed would be an unnecessary and wasteful use of taxpayer funds. First of all, it is not clear who will be conducting this study. If it is left in the hands of the Legislative Management Committee, where are their qualifications to implement such a study? Not one of them claims to have any connection with a library as a librarian, library board member, or even part of a Friends of the Library organization. Not one of them appears to have any education related to the Library Media and Information Science field. Will they recruit professional librarians to assist with this study? How much will that cost?

The assessment of whether an original copy of a book or resource should be kept in the library should be left up to the librarians. They know their community and patrons and can assess the need for the original copy if a new version becomes available. They have been professionally trained to maintain a collection that is relevant to today's needs while also honoring the past and looking to the future needs of their patrons.

They also know the space available in the library and can best assess the storage of such a copy if it is something they want to retain. If a book or resource does not circulate anymore, it has very little value to a library that focuses on keeping current materials available for its patrons. If they would be required to keep every old copy just in case someone may want it in the future, they just as well change the word "library" in their name to "museum." Shelving space is limited in any library and items are constantly added and removed for various reasons. Some books just plain wear out and you might not be able to replace it with a new "old" version. Some books are damaged to the extent that they may cause a health risk if moldy or dirty so would not be allowed to circulate anyway. Would we need to keep those?

Authors that do update the language and such in their books and release that new version may expect the old version to disappear. Their wishes should be honored.

It is also highly unlikely that the original version of a book would completely disappear as we all see the value of items in different ways. The books would still be available to patrons through Inter-library Loan services and most likely through digital services that focus on preserving historical documents.

I believe that AI is still very new, and we will not know the true effects of its development in written materials for a while so a study at this point would yield nothing of value.

Please vote "Do Not Pass" on SB 2278. Thank you for your time.