

HO#4

Florence Thompson

Testimony re: House Bill 1239  
March 6, 2025

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

My name is Renata Smith. The last years of my teaching career were at Summit Oaks as Special Ed instructor in language Arts and English for middle and high school students.

For many years the school district had 20 minutes designated after lunch as "reading time." Each student was expected to read a book for that time. I made sure that a variety of novels were in my classroom, some supplied by the district and others I bought myself at thrift stores. When choosing books for my classroom, I made sure they were age and content appropriate. I could not read every book, but I knew there were authors I could trust to write entertaining subject matter. I also relied on other teachers I trusted to recommend good books. I varied my selections in fiction and non-fiction. Many good novels we read as a class engendered good discussion: Animal Farm, Lord of the Flies, Brave New World, And Then There Were None, To Kill a Mockingbird, October Sky, and the Diary of Anne Frank, to name a few.

Would I, or could I, bring "show and tell" items with the books that are currently found in many libraries, such as "A Court of Silver Flames" which includes a 6-page, full-blown, pornographic coital scene, or "Punk 57" which Goodreads says is for 18 and over. These books I mentioned are available in school libraries across the state. Is pornographic reading material good literature for children? Does it have any artistic value? No, it does not. Books discussing explicit/intimate sex acts belong in the adult section of libraries, not in a classroom or school.

HB 1239 will make it clear that schools and libraries should not be offering material that is harmful to minors. Please protect our children and vote YES on HB 1239.

- Renata Smith