

From: Nicholas Pedersen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2026 1:43 PM
To: Sen. Scott Kawasaki <Sen.Scott.Kawasaki@akleg.gov>
Subject: Senate Bill 238

Senator Kawasaki,

I just read that article regarding book bans in the Daily News Miner. Thank you for introducing the bill to standardize how a book may be reviewed if a parent or group deems the book as inappropriate. Alaska MUST not follow in the footsteps of Oklahoma or Tennessee...who are at the bottom of the nation in education because of the influence of groups like Moms for Liberty. In that vein, I will state that the bible itself has sexually explicit material.

Many youth read at different levels and should be able to read material that is at their level of understanding. Of all the books slated to be banned by the local Fairbanks Moms for Liberty organization, not one was sexually explicit. What those books did do was invite intellectual curiosity and discussion. If Moms for Liberty wants to avoid "grooming and sexual exploitation" then perhaps the children should avoid churches since that is where in the Fairbanks area predators have been arrested (that is a fact given the arrests in North Pole and Ft Wainwright of church youth leaders, as well as a recent state legislator's chief of staff).

Librarians are educated and trained to identify age appropriate literature. They should be protected. And also not subjected to the harassment that groups like Moms for Liberty subjects the schools and community to. If a community board is necessary to review books in question, it should be accomplished with appropriate personnel who have actually read the material and not left to the whims of a radical religious group. It is necessary for some literature to be controversial and thought provoking in order to encourage critical thinking in students.

Books like 'Anne Franks Diary' should never be banned yet it is on the Moms for Liberty List as our tremendous books such as 'The Handmaids Tale' and 'Of Mice and Men'. Granted a 1st grader may not read them but an advanced 5th grader or middle-schooler, and most definitely a high school student can and should read these works.

Don't allow special interests to win because all they do is seek to inhibit critical thinking...and that is what is the most dangerous of all.

Thank you.

Nicholas Pedersen