

Please oppose HSB 720 – Public Library Governance & Access

This bill removes authority from local library boards and consolidates it under city councils—reducing, not enhancing, local control. Current law allows each municipality to determine the governance structure that best fits its community. HSB 720 eliminates that flexibility and places collection decisions in the hands of bodies that have neither requested nor are structured for that responsibility.

The bill also broadly excludes materials containing descriptions or depictions of sex acts from minors. Yet the constitutional standard for obscenity, established in *Miller v. California*, requires a fact-specific judicial determination. Obscenity cannot be declared categorically without risking restriction of protected, non-obscene materials—creating significant legal exposure for cities.

HSB 720 further threatens to withhold local tax funding from libraries found out of compliance and requires every item in a collection—often hundreds of thousands of materials—to be reviewed and designated as age-appropriate on an ongoing basis. The administrative cost and staff time required would divert resources from core services and impose an unfunded mandate on communities.

Finally, ending the confidentiality of minor library records increases legal liability and forces libraries to navigate complex custodial matters outside their role and expertise.

For reasons of constitutional risk, fiscal responsibility, governance disruption, and increased liability, I urge you to vote no on HSB 720.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
L. Schreiber