



www.minotlibrary.org ♦ (701) 852-1045
516 2nd Ave SW Minot, ND 58701

January 13, 2021

The Honorable Jeff Delzer, Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee
North Dakota State Capitol
600 E. Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Chairman Delzer, Chairman Monson and Members of the House Appropriations Committee - Education and Environment Division:

I urge you to support HB1013, relating to funding for the North Dakota State Library and state aid for public libraries, a formula first enacted in 1979.

The North Dakota State Library provides excellent resources to all North Dakota libraries for no additional costs to the libraries or its patrons. Minot residents accessed free, reliable, scholarly resources such as *Academic Search Premiere*, *Business Source Premiere*, *Health Source* and *Science Reference Center* more than 35,000 times in 2020. Further, patrons of the Minot Public Library were able to learn a new language, read digital magazines and take online classes more than 4,000 times in the last year. Minot Public Library patrons also used the library edition of *Ancestry* to complete 1,644 searches. All of these resources are available to the patron of our library at no cost to them or us thanks to the ND State Library. These resources have always been invaluable tools as they are peer-reviewed and not influenced by advertisers, but as we all know, many people had to turn to virtual resources in 2020 and MPL was happy to be able to offer these.

In addition to these invaluable digital resources, State Aid to North Dakota's public libraries allows funding for resources and programs. In 2021, the Minot Public Library anticipates receiving \$49,700 in state aid for our Library services and this aid is essential. These funds are used not just for developing our collections (books, audiobooks, DVDs, eBooks, etc.), but also for our programs.

As our state faced a pandemic, libraries like MPL had to pivot services to our communities in 2020 and with this came some increased expenses and decreased revenue. State Aid from the ND State Library helped the Minot Public Library provide some of the following programs as we adjusted:

- Take & Make crafts for children, teens and adults
- An online Summer Reading Program for all ages
- Virtual 3D printing tutorials and creation
- 3D printed masks for First Responders

Libraries have always helped people in the community through many life transitions; we assist people in locating affordable housing, creating résumés, applying for jobs and meeting other information needs they may have. In 2020, the Minot Public Library was able to provide resources regarding COVID-19 and staff at the ND State Library were essential in helping vet and promote accurate and reliable resources.

Sometimes your local library helps by simply offering movies, board games and cookbooks for families to check out at no cost. However, as City and State revenues decrease the Library staff are being stretched thin and can only assist people to a certain degree. This is why receiving the additional funds via state aid is so important for us – if funding is further reduced we are less able to help our community.

The people of North Dakota know the importance of libraries throughout our state and the positive impact they have in our communities. **I ask that you, too, support libraries in North Dakota and vote in favor of HB1013 as proposed.**

Sincerely,

Janet

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