



Bottineau Public Library
314 5th Street West
Bottineau, ND 58318

701-228-2967

March 22, 2021

Chairman Ray Holmberg and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee
North Dakota State Capitol
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Chairman Holmberg and Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee:

My name is Beth Reitan and I am the director of the Bottineau County Public Library. I am writing to urge you to support the North Dakota State Library's budget as proposed by Mary Soucie .

The North Dakota State Library provides many excellent and invaluable resources to libraries across North Dakota at no additional cost to them. Bottineau County Public Library patrons are able to access free, reliable resources, that without funding from the state of North Dakota, we wouldn't be able to provide. Not only does the funding go toward books for our library, but patrons are able to access online platforms such as Ancestry.com, RB Digital, Tutor ND, and Mango Languages, just to name a few, for free, and from their homes, which now more than ever is so important to the services that we offer. The Bottineau County Public Library was the recipient of the North Dakota State Library's Vision 2020 Grant, that allowed us to digitize the newspapers of Bottineau County and provide them free of charge to patrons anywhere they are located. This has been a hugely popular addition to our library and Bottineau County, one that we wouldn't have been able to accomplish without the funding from the State Library and the State of North Dakota. State Aid also provides so many of us with the funds needed for additional resources and programs for our libraries, such as story times, book clubs, youth and teen programming, adult programming and continuing education opportunities and online classes. However, not only does the funding provide for the many additional opportunities for libraries and our patrons, but the very fundamentals of our libraries, including books, supplies, building maintenance and operating costs. Decreasing funding means a decrease in the excellent resources we are able to provide to our cities and counties. Libraries today offer so much more than books – they are community meeting spaces, employment seeking centers, child development areas, a safe haven for teens, and a welcoming space for people of all walks of life. They continue to be a crucial and important part of our North Dakota communities, and have a positive impact on the people the communities they serve. Now, more than ever, people need a trusted source for reliable information, a welcoming space where groups can meet without judgement, and access to online learning and the latest technology. I ask that you support the North Dakota State Library's budget as proposed so we may continue to provide excellent service to our patrons.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Beth Reitan