



**TESTIMONY ON HB1397
HOUSE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE
01/31/2023
By: Mary Soucie, State Librarian
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Chairman Klemin and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

For the record, I am North Dakota State Librarian Mary Soucie, and I am providing information about HB1397. Since 1924, the State Library has occupied the Liberty Memorial Building (LMB) for 87 years. The building was renovated in 1981 for the express purpose of housing the State Library. When the Liberty Memorial Building was first opened, it housed the State Library, the State Historical Society Museum, the Adjutant General, and the Supreme Court. The State Library has shared the Liberty Memorial Building with a variety of agencies over the years. Currently, North Dakota Parks and Rec has occupied a portion of the building since 2022.

The State Library collection includes over 301,000 physical items that are housed in the Liberty Memorial Building. We have an additional 7,100 historical microfiche that are housed at the State Archives. The State Library has 28.75 FTE. We have four positions that are unable to telecommute. We currently have two staff that telecommute 100% and the remaining staff are on a hybrid schedule.

The appropriation for the Judicial Branch to move into the Liberty Memorial Building is \$55M. This amount does not include any monies allocated to relocating the state agencies that are currently housed within the LMB. The State Library's

preference is to remain on the capitol grounds. We serve members of the public and state employees and need to have our collection accessible to those constituents.

The estimated cost to construct a new library building that is approximately the same size as the amount of space we currently occupy in the Liberty Memorial Building is \$15M. If the State Library is moved off the capitol grounds, we will need an additional appropriation to cover the cost to deliver materials daily to the capitol for state government and thrice weekly to the Bismarck Public Library as well as to collect materials from the state agencies that we catalog for. If we are relocated into an existing building, remodeling costs would need to include the necessary load bearing adjustments for the weight of the collection.

Chairman Klemin and members of the committee, this concludes my testimony. Thank you for your time. I will be happy to answer any questions.