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January 20, 2023

Chairman Nathe and the Members of the House Education and Environment Division,

I am writing to add my voice to those of my fellow librarians in stating how essential the North Dakota State Library is for our state's library system. I am asking you to support HB 1013, a bill for an Act to provide an appropriation for defraying the expenses of the department of public instruction, the center for distance education, the state library, the school for the deaf, and North Dakota vision services - school for the blind; and to provide an exemption. While my letter is specific to the State Library, please know that I find all of these entities to be important.

Funding to our North Dakota State Library is so important to our local libraries including the financial support and the resources that it provides for the public and our library community. Libraries provide a nonjudgmental place to search for jobs, work on resumes, or to ask a question that you aren't sure how to answer. Patrons at the Ward County Public Library come in to use the internet for research, for help in getting out of tough situations, or just because they need access and some friendly faces. We can help with resumes, setting up email addresses, computer training, and so much more.

It is only with the help of the North Dakota State Library; that we are able to offer these services. Ryan with the North Dakota State Library was available to answer a technical question of mine the other day. It is through the interlibrary loan services offered through NDSL that we are able to expand our collections beyond what are smaller libraries are fiscally able to supply.

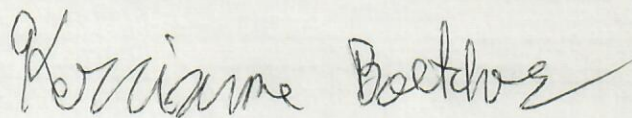
The Ward County Public Library is so thankful for the opportunity to receive two library vision grants during the previous biennium. The first grant allowed us to expand and update our makerspace that is available to our patrons. This is used by homeschool families to expand their curriculum, by families who are unable to purchase some of the projects/materials that are available, and by our young 4-H students who are looking for new projects with their organization. The other grant helped us in promoting our new bookmobile in Ward County and getting our young patrons excited about reading.

One of the aspects in the NDSL budget that I am most excited about is the ILL (interlibrary loan) Bridge. As I mentioned previously, it is only through the services currently offered that we are able to expand the collections that we offer to our patrons. A local bridge would make it easier to borrow from other ND libraries. This would mean shorter wait times for patrons allowing

them to receive materials faster. The extra costs of postage would go down for our libraries. There have been several times when we have requested a book through ILL that has been available in-state, but it comes from thousands of miles away. This delay has often meant the item did not arrive until after the patron needed it.

Libraries are a vital part of North Dakota and the State Library is a vital part of our network as a voice on a state and national level. I ask that you, too, support libraries in North Dakota and vote in favor of HB 1013 as proposed.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kerriane Boetcher". The signature is written in dark ink and includes a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Kerriane Boetcher  
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