



Red River Valley Writing Project
Improving Literacy, K-College

Dear Chairman Nathe and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ben Melby, Director of the Red River Valley Writing Project (RRVWP), and I support funding for HB 1013, specifically a passthrough grant funding writing project work with North Dakota teachers and students.

Funds from this bill are necessary to sustain our non-profit organization that serves K-College educators and students across the entire state. Our partner organization, Northern Plains Writing Project (NPWP) is based in Minot and serves western North Dakota, while RRVWP serves primarily eastern North Dakota. Our organization's aims are:

1. To provide high-quality **teacher training** for writing instruction.
2. To increase the quality and quantity of **student writing** done both inside and outside of schools.
3. To enrich our communities and **civic life** through more opportunities to write together and share through writing.

The scope and impacts of our public service are detailed on an enclosed project summary. In the past biennium, we reached a total of **160 teachers**, with **164 hours of professional development training**. Additionally, we engaged **over 600 student writers** in our writing competitions, camps, workshops, and writing groups.

Passthrough grant funding from HB1013 will support:

1. Teacher professional development courses on **AI literacy, civic literacy, and digital literacy**.
2. Inservice teacher training on **writing across the curriculum** and workplace writing.
3. Youth programs such as **“Raising Rural Voices”** (an initiative to bring rural students' stories to a national audience) and the **Scholastic Art & Writing Awards** (the “state championships” for teen artists and writers).
4. Instructional coaching support and resource development for **rural, high needs ND schools**.

Our proposed budget outline for the 25-27 biennium can be found on the enclosed budget request.

Thank you for your important, time-intensive civic service. We hope to return the favor by working hard to support student writers and the teaching of writing in the state of North Dakota.

Sincerely,

Ben Melby, Director, Red River Valley Writing Project

RED RIVER VALLEY WRITING PROJECT

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