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Your window to the world.

January 24, 2025

Members of the House Appropriations Committee:

I am writing in support of HB 1013, with special consideration of the North Dakota State Library. The State Library and its staff are a valuable resource to libraries around the state. They provide a variety of services that we would not be able to offer on our own.

At my own small library, the State Library provides our IT support, which helps us with connectivity issues, all server and modem updates including on-site updates, and troubleshooting for when we and our patrons have issues. The State Library also catalogs all our new materials, as we are unable to maintain a dedicated cataloger on our small staff. The NDSL also provides the book kits that we use for our book club, as we do not have the funds or space to purchase multiple copies of a single title. We also receive database access through the State Library, which supports everyone from amateur genealogists to homeschool families writing research papers. We also benefit from the staff training opportunities offered by the NDSL, as well as the resources they provided to help us with our Summer Reading Programs.

My library has received several grants from the State Library during my tenure, including grants that have helped us create new collections such as our circulation STEM kits, fund programs like our book clubs and Summer Reading Program, and remodel our Children's Area to make it safe for our youngest patrons. In the last biennium, we received a technology grant that allowed us to add new iPads that our patrons can check out, as well as a laptop for in-house use that is frequently used for zoom meetings, drivers permit testing, and proctored exams.

Finally, the State Library is instrumental in helping us bring in books from other libraries through Interlibrary Loan. Because our library is small, and our space and budget is limited, bringing in books from other libraries is necessary to ensure that our patrons are getting access to all the materials they want and need. In the last year, we borrowed almost 300 items through the State Library. This includes items from their own collection and items that they helped us borrow from other libraries in the state that we don't have access to. They also borrowed over 40 items from us to send out to other libraries in North Dakota. The proposed ILL Bridge will make this process easier and more efficient, so that we can provide more needed materials to our patrons and community members.

I urge you to continue funding that North Dakota State Library so that our patrons and library users throughout North Dakota can continue to benefit from that wonderful range of services that they provide.

Yours,

Rachel Kercher

Youth Services Librarian
Leach Public Library