



**TESTIMONY ON HB1254
POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS COMMITTEE
STATE LIBRARIAN MARY J. SOUCIE**

Representative Longmuir and members of the committee,

For the record, I am State Librarian Mary Soucie, and I will provide information and support for HB1254. The North Dakota State Library has three primary constituencies: North Dakota libraries, state agencies, and North Dakota citizens.

Currently, statute says that we provide materials to citizens of North Dakota who do not have adequate library facilities. There are 23 counties in North Dakota that do not have countywide public library service and six counties that do not have any public library service. In 2022, the State Library placed library vending machines in 9 of the 23 counties without countywide service.

Our physical collection has over 300,000 items in it. We also participate in the North Dakota *Library2Go* e-materials consortium. The collection includes over 65,000 items. The members of the consortium include 62 of the 82 public libraries in the state.

The State Library has long issued library cards to all North Dakotans, and we are hoping to align Century Code with our current practices. Citizens that live in a community with a library that has limited hours or a library that doesn't participate in the e-materials consortium have access to our collections as well as the ability to request an InterLibrary Loan from another library. From my research, I believe that we are the only state library in the country that will mail library materials directly to a patron rather than requiring them to request materials through their local library. Currently, the State Library pays the postage to the patron and the patron is responsible to return the item to us either in person or through the mail. We do not anticipate any fiscal impact from this change.

Chairman Longmuir and members of the committee, thank you for your time today and I am happy to answer any questions.