

Dear Chairman Longmuir, Vice Chairmen Fegley & Jonas, & the fellow members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee,

My name is Nicholas E. Lero, and I am a part of the Education Services Department at Prairie Public. I'm writing in opposition to HB 1255, not only as an employee of Prairie Public, the organization most affected by this action, but as a citizen of North Dakota who has seen the positive impact public broadcasting has on my fellow North Dakotans. Prairie Public provides services that benefit your current and future constituents, practically, culturally, and educationally, with clear, measurable impact you can see today, that would be ill-advised to reduce or cut completely.

Much of my job outside the office includes travelling around the state to provide educational services, free of charge, to schools, homeschool groups, and childcare centers, that would be difficult to facilitate independently for these groups, given the rural nature of where approximately 307,000, or 36% of the population lives. Furthermore, the distance and economics separating these communities from institutions like museums and universities make free, mobile services vital to nurturing the cultural and historical education rural students receive. Finally, not only do our television & radio outputs help my previous point, they also provide a network for emergency broadcasts that alert citizens in areas where cell phone reception is subpar.

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to give my testimony regarding this bill.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Lero, Prairie Public Broadcasting