

My opposition to HB 1255 – Why is this legislation being proposed?

When I heard there was a bill in the ND Legislature to prohibit use of state or federal funding for public broadcasting, I wondered “Why would anyone want to oppose such highly valued, time-tested, readily accessible programming?” I can find no clearly stated rationale for this proposed legislation - only a tersely worded eight-line bill to eliminate public funding for this valuable educational resource.

I moved to ND in 1981 with my wife and our 8wk-old son, and have been proud to call myself a North Dakotan for the past 43 years. A boy across the street grew up with my son in the 1980s, and both still live in North Dakota today. That neighbor (now a 42yr old) has worked for Prairie Public Broadcasting for well over a decade. I have several acquaintances who also work for PPB, plus an in-law who has served on the PPB Board of Directors for many years. All these people are public servants who are passionate about the impact their work has on the well-being of everyday North Dakotans.

Sure, it costs money to broadcast radio and television programming. I and many others contribute annually to their efforts. But without public support, PBS would not be commercially viable. Public Broadcasting is my priority when I turn on the car radio, as I can do without annoying commercials and abrasive talk show hosts. The music, special programs, and unbiased news are a real value to me, and I believe to many other North Dakotans.

Again, I wonder “What is the complaint?”

Sincerely,
Mac Butler