

February 25, 2025

Senate State and Local Government Committee
North Dakota State Legislature

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 1255, which would eliminate state funding for Prairie Public. As a longtime North Dakota resident and an advocate for accessible education, reliable news, and cultural programming, I firmly believe that Prairie Public is an essential resource for our state.

For more than 60 years, Prairie Public has provided free, high-quality educational programming to families, students, and educators. The station's commitment to early childhood education through PBS KIDS content is invaluable, ensuring that all children, regardless of their background, have access to research-based learning tools that prepare them for success in school. Additionally, Prairie Public's educational outreach programs, including the Prairie Public Learning Express, bring hands-on learning opportunities to rural and underserved communities – something that would be difficult, if not impossible, to replace if funding were eliminated.

Beyond education, Prairie Public plays a critical role in preserving and sharing North Dakota's history and culture. Its documentaries, radio series, and regional storytelling give voice to the unique stories of our state, ensuring that our heritage is recorded and celebrated for future generations. It also provides fact-based news and election coverage that strengthens our democracy by keeping North Dakotans informed and engaged in civic life.

State funding for Prairie Public is an investment in our communities, education, and democracy. Losing this support would disproportionately impact rural residents, students, and those who rely on free, over-the-air access to educational and informational programming. I urge you to vote **against HB 1255** and continue supporting this vital public service.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Dennis Stangl