

Dear all those listening today,

It was the mid 90's. I was sitting on my mom's lap sharing her old, blue chair. Channel 2 appeared across the screen, as it always did. When I was young, wispy blonde hair and bruised knees, I had no idea the impact Prairie Public had on me. Looking back, these shows encouraged me, educated me, and were even a safe place for me after school. The characters were entertainment, but over the years, became friends. Sesame Street, Arthur, Clifford, Wish Bone, Mr. Rogers, and Reading Rainbow; just to name a few. Even when we didn't have access to cable TV, there was always, always Channel 2 to soothe the quiet living room.

Although the impact was not known to me all those years growing up, I can see it now through my kids. A full circle moment hearing my son recite excitedly what historical figures he learned about on Xavier Riddle, how Molly of Denali comforted him during a migraine spell, or how Carl the Collector made him feel like someone understood him. My daughter, rewatching Kratt's Creatures and Zaboomafoo over and over memorizing facts about animals all over the world. In a world where children's entertainment is subpar to say the least, PBS is the highest quality and the only network I want my kids watching. Both kids just finished writing their stories for the PBS kid's writers contest. My son playing games on the PBS kid's game app. My kids finding comfort and friendship through Prairie Public, just as I did.

For me, the series "Recipes from Grandma's Kitchen" are what most recently brought me so much joy. In a world filled with chaos, watching Paul Welder make his mom's baking powder noodles or Alma Janke Schott make traditional Lebkuchen. What a beautiful passage not only being able to hear these stories and see these recipes being made and passed down, but for these individuals to be able to share their stories and heritage with the world is an irreplaceable experience.

The German's from Russia are especially dear to me. My husband is a German from Russia. Hearing the stories from this series was like finding a missing puzzle piece we may have never found. All the interviews are preserving history, culture, and tradition that could have been lost forever. I know no other network that strives to educate and preserve history like Prairie Public. What an absolute asset to us all.

We must not forget the Prairie Musicians, Prairie Mosaic, featured artists, artifact spotlight, children's programs, radio shows, podcasts, and free online resources.

Not only do these bring much value to our local communities, but they bring so much purpose to the creators. All these local creators have a name, a story, and meaning they were able to fulfill because of Prairie Public.

I'll be honest, it's a late night. My kids are sleeping and I am tired. My house is messier than I want it to be. I could be doing a million other things right now, but I am choosing to write this testimony. There may be grammar errors, but I hope my message is clear. I am writing to you all because I am so passionate about preserving Prairie Public.

I called the Prairie Public corporate office today to ask a few questions about what would happen if this bill passes and funding will be cut. The receptionist was kind, and hopeful stating "higher ups are staying positive and don't want to worry us. They are going to do everything they can to keep the broadcast going. There will be cuts, but to what extent, we don't know".

This broke my heart. In the background, PBS was on the TV. My kid PBS kids writing contest papers scattered on the kitchen table. PBS kids DVDs lined up on the bookshelf.

If this bill passes, will it be the beginning of the end for Prairie Public? Stopping the state funding would be detrimental to all the listeners, watchers, and creators that rely on Prairie Public. Prairie Public is timeless and vital to local communities, the young and old. Please, North Dakota hear our voice and continue to support Prairie Public as you have for decades.

Thank you.