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State of North Dakota
North Dakota State Senate
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505

February 27, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB1255, a bill that poses a serious threat to Prairie Public and the essential services it provides to North Dakotans. As a proud supporter and member of Prairie Public, I am deeply concerned about the impact this legislation could have on the availability of free, original programming that informs, educates, and unites our communities.

Prairie Public is more than just a broadcaster—it is a vital institution that delivers high-quality journalism, educational resources for children, locally produced cultural programming, and emergency public service announcements. Many North Dakotans, especially in rural areas, rely on its free, over-the-air programming as a trusted source of information and connection. By undermining its funding or imposing unnecessary restrictions, HB1255 threatens to diminish this invaluable public service.

From a legal and policy standpoint, public broadcasting is a fundamental part of our state's commitment to education and civic engagement. Weakening it through legislative action could have unintended consequences, limiting access to nonpartisan news, educational content, and local storytelling that reflects the unique character of North Dakota. Furthermore, such a measure risks putting our state at odds with longstanding federal and state support for public media, potentially resulting in the loss of matching funds that sustain these services.

This issue is not just about television and radio—it is about preserving an institution that fosters an informed citizenry, supports local artists and journalists, and ensures that North Dakotans of all backgrounds have access to high-quality, fact-based programming. Any attempt to weaken Prairie Public is an attack on the right of our communities to stay informed, educated, and connected.

I urge you to reject HB1255 and instead champion policies that protect and strengthen public broadcasting in North Dakota. Our state deserves continued access to the invaluable programming Prairie Public provides, and I hope I can count on your leadership to preserve it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew Nordin