

Members of the committee:

I write this in support of Prairie Public Broadcasting. Prairie Public provides a wonderful service that no other broadcaster does in North Dakota. The programming that they provide on television and radio is top notch.

On the television side, no other broadcaster in North Dakota would develop shows specific to North Dakota history. Those shows include the “Lost City of Elbowoods”, the “Nonpartisan League”, and “Germans from Russia” to name a few. They also provide valuable educational programs including Nova, Nature, American Masters, American Experience and many more. For journalism, they have Frontline which doesn’t spend 2 minutes on a topic, they dig into and spend an hour on it.

Children’s programming was my first introduction to Prairie Public. I watched Sesame Street and Mr. Rodgers as a child. There was nothing better for me than watching those programs and learning that the things that I was feeling as a child were normal. At night my parents would let us watch Nature or some other program that had wildlife in it.

For the radio side, no other broadcaster in North Dakota provides the variety of programs that you can listen to in a day. You can start with news and then listen to classical music throughout the day. When Main Street comes on you know you are going to get a North Dakota perspective on what is going on in the state. If you keep listening it is more news followed by discussion on the economy closing out the night with a travel show, information on the human condition, or something that you never knew you needed to learn about. Finally, your weeknight will end in more classical music or jazz.

No FM radio in the state can you leave Fargo and drive to Fortuna and not miss your program. You will just need to adjust your dial a few times. No radio or tv station in the state will consistently cover the Legislative Session or hold debates for public office.

Most developed countries have a public broadcasting. The public broadcasting has no agenda, is not for profit, and is vital for getting information out to the public during emergencies.

Defunding Prairie Public would hurt our communities. The cost of Prairie Public is \$1,200,000 per biennium, that is \$50,000 a month. Find something else in the budget that costs so little but provides so much benefit to the state.

Thank you to the committee for their time.

Sincerely,

Eric Gaasland, Concerned citizen.