



**TESTIMONY ON SB2219  
SENATE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
MARY J. SOUCIE, STATE LIBRARIAN  
JANUARY 23, 2025**

Chairman Roers and members of the committee,

For the record, I am State Librarian Mary Soucie. I would like to provide information and support for SB2219. SB2219 provides clarification related to surplus library materials and the State Aid for Public Libraries grant program.

The State Library has over 300,000 physical items in our collection and almost 1 million electronic materials. Library collections are dynamic entities. To ensure that a library collection is relevant, current, and accessible, regular weeding is essential. Weeding is the process of systematically reviewing and removing library materials that are no longer relevant, have been damaged beyond repair or are not being utilized. When the State Library weeds our collection, we assess if the materials would have value to a local library in their collection. For many years, the State Library has offered weeded materials to North Dakota public and K-12 school libraries through a lottery system. We have refined that process to streamline it for the libraries and for NDSL staff to administer. We are seeking an exemption that would allow us to send materials directly to libraries without providing the information to state surplus.

Per §54-24-03, the State Librarian shall provide and care for all library materials in all collections of the state library and work to focus the collections. Ensuring that library materials that should be shared with the broader North Dakota library community is in line with that duty. The State Library used to have an exemption to dispose of surplus library materials when we were part of a different agency structure, and the exemption is similar to an exemption that the State Historical Society has.

The second section of the bill seeks to provide clarification regarding the requirement for the State Aid for Public Libraries grant program. Section §54-24.2-06 requires that public libraries complete the annual public library report and submit it to the State Library. The additional language to be added to Century Code makes it clear to libraries that if they do not complete the annual report the library will not receive State Aid the following year. In the past, the State Library believed that we had the authority to not award State Aid to a library that did not complete the PLS. When we were reviewing the statutes that our agency operates under with a new Assistant Attorney General

assigned to our agency in 2023, the recommendation was to seek language clarifying that the requirement impacted eligibility.

Madame Chair and members of the committee, this concludes my testimony. Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer any questions.