

**Dawn Kingstad
on behalf of
the Glendive Public Library**

Education and Local Government Interim Committee

Public Testimony

September 8, 2016

Chairman Jones and Members of the Education and Local Government Interim Committee:

For the record, my name is Dawn Kingstad. I am a Library Director of the Dawson County Libraries: Glendive Public Library and Richey Public Library. I am also the Past-President of the Montana Library Association.

Libraries across the state have been positively impacted by the Direct State Aid Per Capita/ Per Square Mile. I am just one voice, one representative of the libraries in our state, but my story is very similar to the stories of the other 82 public libraries across our wonderful, vast state.

In the past few years, our library has seen dramatic change in our landscape. Even though Glendive, Montana was on the fringe of the oil boom it has seen a rise and also a decline in its population. For example, in 2012 our summer reading program was just 250 participants. Fast-forward to 2015, at the height of the oil boom, and we had over 758 participants. Although the population in eastern Montana has declined somewhat this year our library still had 655 participants in our 2016 Summer Reading Program.

Statistics tell part of the story, but not the whole story. The money that the Glendive Public Library received from State Aid in 2016 was \$3,954.02. The majority of our State Aid funding went towards the library's Summer Reading Program and the libraries new additional three story-times. The library observed life-changing results. Over 59% of the participants of our Summer Reading Program, read daily and attended our programming. There was at least 350 people in attendance at our Summer Reading Kick-off Party. This year our library also incorporated fitness as part of our programming and had activities such as make your own jump rope and then we had a jumpathon. The last four years of our Summer Reading Programs we have also incorporated math and science into our weekly activities. The Glendive Public Library, along with the majority of Montana public libraries collaborate with schools and other community organizations to combat against the effects of know as the summer slide. Summer slide is know as the tendency to lose the achievement gains that the student had made in the previous school year. Educational research has documented in its findings that low income families are great impacted by the summer slide. One of the main goals of the Glendive Public Library's Reading Program was to be a free resource that all eastern Montana residents could access.

With the increase in funding due to the State Aid, our library went from having a one story-time a week to four weekly story-times. These extra story times are not your typical story times you may remember from your childhood. The Glendive Public Library is providing quality program that assist schools preparing our children for kindergarten. The library's additional story-times focus on preparing children for learning milestones. Dawson County has more students than the preschools can incorporate and some families are not able to afford the additional cost. Our library is collaborating with our elementary schools and preschools to prepare our community's children for kindergarten. This September, I was able to provide our patrons with the mock preschool / kindergarten. Children and parents were able to be in a stress-free environment and were able to interact with learning materials that the children will see in the upcoming year.

Our library has also incorporated a weekly Sensory Story-time that is inclusive to children that have special needs such as autism, sensory disorder, attention deficit disorder, children with social anxiety and for any child that parents wanted to be if it from using all of one's senses for learning. Funds have went towards things supplies as activity balls, special chairs and other supplies that make our story-time adaptable ore accessible to all of our community.

This year our Richey Public Library had its own summer reading program and 57 participants actively participated in programming and documenting their reading efforts. The new program was positively accepted in the Richey community.

The Glendive Public Library not only provides programming and activities for Dawson County residents but we also are a resource for many patrons in eastern Montana area. We have many patrons from the surrounding towns such as Wibaux, Sidney, Terry, Savage and other communities the drive to participate in our programs. The librarians in Montana are known for making the most out of their resources and also for sharing with as many residents as possible.

Thank you Chairman Jones and members of the Committee for this opportunity to provide an update on the importance and impact of this funding to your Montana libraries.

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