

March 11, 2016

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to share with you today. My name is Robin Clark, and I write as the director the Emporia Public Library. I speak as a member of the North Central Kansas Library System and I oppose the changes to HB 2719.

Regional library systems have played an important role in distributed services of many kinds to the Kansas Public Library community.

Most of the Kansas regional systems have some type of integrated library system (catalog) consortium. Having many public libraries in a system using the same software provides an informed network of administrators and allows for easy resource sharing. Emporia Public Library plans to join the North Central Kansas Library System consortium in 2017 and will see a savings of between \$2000 and \$5000 annually compared to the system we are currently using. The savings will be used to provide items for the collection or for additional staff.

Kansas Library Express (KLE), the Kansas interlibrary courier service, provides library users with rapid and direct access to library resources. Kansas Library Express connects more than 300 libraries throughout Kansas with a convenient and cost effective delivery service that expands the ability of libraries to readily share their collections for the benefit of library users. This service saves libraries postage fees and allows a library to literally expand its collection for its community since materials can be obtained from another library in a relatively short time period.

Emporia Public Library receives the Zinio magazine product from the system at a reduced rate through a regional contract. We would not be able to afford this product on our own.

Besides distributed services, the regional library systems play an important role in the education – both beginning and continuing- of library staff. I have participated in many educational and networking opportunities both in the Northeast Kansas Library System and the North Central Kansas Library System and have found them to be affordable and professionally encouraging. For many library staff members, including directors, regional educational opportunities are the only way that current issues, trends and products are brought forward as well as providing a time of face to face networking. One excellent example of this type of education is the APPLE (Applied Public Library Education) program administered by the Kansas regional library systems. The systems use webinar software to teach library directors the fundamentals of operating a public library.

System grants provide librarians with the funding to attend the annual Kansas Library Association conference, an annual continuing education opportunity. Grants also provide funding for the purchase of technology and presenters/materials for library programming.

The technology support that the systems provide is critical to rural libraries. Not every library can afford to retain local talent to keep library computers/wifi/routers/etc. up and running on a

daily basis. The systems encourage libraries to update their software and hardware in order to provide better services to their community.

In brief, the regional library systems uplift and enhance the communities they serve and can be seen as the glue that holds the public libraries (and sometimes public library directors) in the state together which allows the libraries to be a cohesive information delivery service point.