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Madam Chair and members of the Committee, for the record my name is Darlene Staffeldt and I am your State Librarian. I am sorry I cannot appear before you today but I wanted to submit the following testimony. Thank you for your time and consideration of this issue.

The State archives provide a valuable service to the people of Montana by preserving and providing access to the historic records of state government. This service allows the citizens of this state to hold state government accountable for its actions and to research and study the history of their state.

These archival records are a part of Montana's information resources. Compared to most other states Montana is "resource poor"; our scarcity of resources mandates that libraries share their resources to provide citizens with access to information. Access to information or intellectual capital is as important to the future of our communities as access to financial capital.

Please help the Historical Society preserve and provide access to these Montana historical records. Thank you.