

Testimony on HB244
Senate State Administration Committee
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Testimony presented by
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The Montana Historical Society supports HB244 which designates Terry, Montana as the home of the Evelyn Cameron Gallery.

Evelyn Cameron is a significant historical figure in Montana. As an early woman homesteader and professional photographer she is unique. Her portraits of early Montanans' homesteading experiences contain some of the most significant documentation of eastern Montana in existence today.

As this bill states, the only permanent exhibit of Evelyn Cameron's photographs is in the Evelyn Cameron Gallery in Terry. The Terry Cameron Gallery was created after the Montana Historical Society received a significant collection from the heirs of Evelyn Cameron in 1990. The Society provided copies of the entire collection to the Prairie County Museum --over 2,000 photos at a cost to the Society of approximately \$20,000. Included in this gift was a set of exhibit quality prints which are now part of the permanent exhibit in the Evelyn Cameron Gallery.

To indicate our continued support for the partnership, the Society authored a \$23,000 Cultural and Aesthetic Grant proposal which, if funded, will research the many unidentified subjects in the Cameron photographs, catalog them, and create an online exhibit focused on Prairie County where Cameron lived and worked.

Periodic exhibits at the state museum allow the Society to direct visitors to Terry to see the area and more of Cameron's work.

We believe this bill will assist the town of Terry economically by attracting more visitors and will provide an excellent opportunity to educate the general public about this extremely important and significant Montanan.

I urge your support of HB244.