Greetings,

I wasn't called before the end of oral testimony yesterday and I hope you will read my written testimony and agree that the Williams branch library which is a branch in Josephine Community Library District (District 7) is deserving of some American Rescue Act funds.

I have lived and raised 4 kids in Williams for 20 years and have watched the digital divide make resources, information and opportunity increasingly harder for our rural residents to reach. The pandemic has exacerbated that, our school district polled families to see if remote learning would be successful and found that less than 40 percent said they had access to WIFI,in Williams in particular much of the town is outside of both internet and cellular service. On any given day there can be up to 12 cars parked in the very limited space in front of the library to use the only public WIFI available for more than 30 miles. Here is a list of things our communities residents are doing; Students who go to the middle school (which is more than 20 miles away) did their remote learning, filing unemployment claims, filing SBA claims, looking for jobs and housing, filing taxes, connecting with loved ones they cant see in person, taking continuing adult education for current or hoped for jobs, sending me package labels to print for their home businesses. The list goes on to include anything you take for granted that is now only available to do digitally.

Williams branch library is housed in a small, mobile building built in 1977 with no bathroom or running water. As our town grows more people require the services and information our library provides. It's no wonder that rural populations have such enmity for urban political agendas because they rarely see the policies paid for serve their communities. Please consider helping us create more equity and opportunity in our rural town by helping us fund a building with resources for Williams to have access to.

Thank you for your time,

Amber Sherman-Guient

Williams Branch Manager and Williams resident