

May 4, 2016

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Dear Minister Kirby,

The Ontario Library Association (OLA) includes more than 5,000 members who work in public, school, and academic libraries and is connected to the Newfoundland and Labrador Library Association (NLLA) through The Partnership, Canada's network of Provincial and Territorial Library Associations. While we understand the financial strain of challenging economic times, we hope you will reconsider the implementation of a provincial book tax and cuts to public libraries in your province. Both will have a serious impact on the education and well-being of Canadians.

Investing in public libraries has been proven to yield a measurable, positive return that has a significant cultural and economic impact on communities. For example, in Ontario:

- **Economic Impact:** the presence of a library in a community has a positive economic impact and actually contributes to economic prosperity. For example, the town of Stratford, Ontario, with a population of 30,000 reports for every \$1 spent on the library, residents of Stratford receive \$7.48 in benefits (a 648% return on investment). The calculation looks at tangible boosts to the local economy such as employment, purchasing, and supports from use of library programs and services.
- **Libraries support job skills and education by providing an accessible and connected learning space for Canadians of all ages.** Approximately 25% of Ontarians do not have Internet access at home or work, but have access at their public library. Only libraries have the professional staff, training opportunities, equipment, access, and infrastructure to serve every community in the province.
- **Spending on materials in libraries increases demand and use of the library.** Libraries with a higher per capita spending on materials have higher usage. (Canadian Urban Libraries Council, [Trend Report](#), 2011).

It is our hope that this information will help guide decisions related to libraries and book purchasing in Newfoundland and Labrador. We are committed to supporting our Newfoundland and Labrador library colleagues to find ways to support a robust library service for your community. We welcome your questions, and invite any opportunity to strengthen access to library services in your province.

Best regards,



Todd Kyle, 2016 President, Ontario Library Association
Cc Amanda Tiller-Hackett, president, Newfoundland and Labrador Library Association