

July 6, 2011

Hon. Michael Chan
Minister of Tourism and Culture
900 Bay Street, Hearst Block, 9th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A2

Dear Minister Chan:

This letter outlines the official position of the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (Federation) to your announcement on April 14, 2011 to invest \$2.85 million in one-time funding to strengthen Ontario's public library system. Of this amount, \$1.9 million will be divided among 385 public library systems as Capacity Building Grants.

In these challenging economic times, the public library sector welcomes any additional funding it receives. The Federation is grateful for your recognition of "the immeasurable impact that public libraries have on making our communities socially and economically stronger". The Federation also appreciates your personal commitment to address the need for increased provincial funding for the operation of Ontario public libraries.

The Federation continues to recommend, as outlined in the Federation's December 2010 proposal, that the Ministry adopt the following for calculating provincial Public Library Operating Grants (PLOGs):

- A per capita approach using the most recent census data in each municipality thereby meeting the needs of libraries serving high growth populations, while (a) accommodating for inflation since the PLOGs were last adjusted and (b) reinstating the 40% cuts imposed in the 1990s; and
- Area supplements for rural and northern libraries.

This formula is supported unanimously by libraries of all sizes and all areas of the Province.

The one-time 2011 Capacity Building Grants (\$1.9M) are not per capita based, equitable or sustainable, and perpetuate the inequities of an outdated per household model.

The Federation hopes to continue conversations of substance on the PLOGs with your Ministry on an ongoing basis so Ontario library patrons in all communities will be well-served.

Yours truly,

Jim Bennett
Chair, Board of Directors

David Allen
Chief Executive Officer

cc. Steven Davidson, Deputy Minister of Tourism and Culture