



∴ ontario library association

April 3, 2018

The Honourable Charles Sousa
Minister of Finance
7th Floor, Frost Building South
7 Queen's Park Crescent
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1Y7

Dear Minister Sousa,

I would like to express our sincere thanks for the significant investment in Ontario's Public and First Nations Libraries and in the Digital Public Library announced in the 2018 Ontario Budget. Libraries from across the province are already expressing their thanks and support for this important investment in the sustainability of libraries, and the recognition that libraries are playing a vital role in communities across the province, especially in many rural, Northern and First Nations communities.

This increase to the Public Library Operating Grant marks the end of a more than two decade funding freeze for Ontario public libraries. This Digital Public Library will act as a centralized digital resource that will provide all Ontarians, including those living in rural, First Nations and remote communities, with digital content such as e-books, e-learning, music and audiobooks; research databases; special collections; and accessible and alternative format materials across a common web platform. We are also pleased to see an investment of an additional \$500 million over three years to expand broadband connectivity in rural, First Nations and northern communities

Together, these investments will help put Ontario's public libraries on a sustainable path and empower them to continue to support community-oriented education and lifelong learning, poverty reduction and community economic development across Ontario. Moreover, it recognizes the importance of ensuring that Ontarians of all ages have equitable access to the resources they need to learn and compete, no matter where they live in the province.

We look forward to working with the provincial government in the implementation of these investments and in the Digital Public Library.

Sincerely,

Kerry Badgley
2018 President - Ontario Library Association

cc: Shelagh Paterson - Executive Director, Ontario Library Association
Stephen Abram – Executive Director, Federation of Ontario Public Libraries
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