Subject: New report calls for broader support of Canada’s public libraries

Dear **[insert representative full name, title]**,

I’m writing on behalf of the public libraries in **[name region or riding**] to seek your support on an issue critical to our future. Public libraries are essential infrastructure in communities across Canada, yet are increasingly struggling to relieve post-pandemic pressures.

On October 4, 2023, *OVERDUE: The Case for Canada’s Public Libraries* was released, establishing libraries as critical social infrastructure in need of renewed investment. Today, I am asking you to review this report and amplify it among your colleagues and constituents.

The report, released by the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) and Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (CULC/CBUC), is the outcome of three years of engagement with Canada’s urban public libraries through one of the most extraordinary periods in human history – the COVID-19 pandemic.

Canada’s libraries swiftly pivoted to support local needs in their communities, despite not being identified as essential services. Some distributed food to those who needed it, lent devices to school children struggling with virtual learning, visited seniors’ to combat social isolation, and so much more. Libraries can always be count on to step up to help in hard times and respond to community needs.

Libraries are a critical part of post-pandemic recovery, driving economic growth, and supporting a better quality of life for all. Today, many public libraries across Canada are finding themselves as the triage centres on main streets and downtowns, supporting social services and managing crisis response on the ground level.

Libraries work outside of their mandates to address social vulnerability across the country, but are struggling to handle the demands amidst a national mental health and addiction crisis and soaring costs of living.

The funding gap between the growing number of services being provided and the resources to do so is staggering and growing, but libraries offer great economic return with what they do have. For every $1 invested in Canada’s urban libraries, $6 is generated in community economic impact, a return of over 600%.

I am asking you to review this report, amplify the content, and bring it to your colleagues to implement the following the tactics outlined in the report during [**cities/province’s/federal**] next strategic plan and budget cycle.

We are in need of investment that recognizes Canada’s libraries as a national asset to renew social cohesion, contribute to economic growth, and support community resilience for the future.

**Yours sincerely,**

**Name**