



**Manitoba Library Trustees Association**

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May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Hon. Dale Kirby, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, West Block  
Confederation Building  
P. O. Box 8700  
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Dear Minister Kirby:

It is with grave concern that the Board of Directors of the Manitoba Library Trustees Association (MLTA) is writing to you. On April 29<sup>th</sup> we learned that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador plans to close 54 of its 95 public libraries within the next two years as the province moves toward a regional library system. These cuts are devastating for the people of your province, especially those in rural areas, as they will have to travel much further to access library services. In Manitoba, joining a Regional Library system has enabled small communities to establish and/or retain a viable library with expanded resources available to their citizens.

Public libraries are part of the essential social and economic infrastructure for strong communities. Public libraries provide the resources and the capacity that allow communities to flourish. Libraries address community needs that are essential to the public; they are a key pillar of educational infrastructure for literacy development, lifelong learning, and community programming. Libraries help unemployed or underemployed people find jobs. They provide the community with free internet access and access to information, thus ensuring the ability for all to access services that require on-line submissions only. They are the great equalizer. Closing libraries closes opportunity.

The Manitoba Library Trustees Association urges the government of Newfoundland and Labrador to reconsider its decision to close 54 public libraries and recognize that investing in public libraries is an investment in the potential of the people of your province.

Sincerely,

Donna Kormilo, Chair  
Brandon, MB

Andrew Robert, Vice Chair  
Stonewall, MB

Patti Brown  
Portage la Prairie

Marvin Plett, Past Chair  
Winkler, MB

Orest Kinasevych  
Winnipeg, MB

Dave Walker, Treasurer  
Erickson, MB

Bud Sigurdson  
Gladstone

Cc: Hon. Rochelle Squires, Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage, Province of Manitoba