

Box 1827
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 3R1



The Honourable Rochelle Squires
Minister of Tourism, Culture, Sport and Consumer Protection
Room 118 - 450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 0V8

To: The Honourable Rochelle Squires,

On behalf of the Manitoba Association of Library Technicians (MALT) we are contacting you in support of the Flin Flon Public Library, which has recently been unable to continue providing service to their community during Saturday hours due to a shortage of funding.

We are writing this letter in support of the Flin Flon Public Library to advocate for increased funding in support of libraries in northern Manitoba communities. The Province of Manitoba provides part of the library's funding, on a per capita basis of \$8.50, and has not increased since 2004. In 2004 the rate was \$7.50. We encourage the province to do more to ensure funding is provided using a system that ensures northern communities will have access to the valuable literacy and education services that libraries provide. Even in the face of unsteady or negative population growth, these services are necessary and the demand for them is not exclusively tied to a declining population. In many cases demand for library services continues to increase.

Provincial funding is tied to the census, if a local census declines, or is not completed, the funding also decreases, this needs to be addressed. Flin Flon Public Library's funding decreased after the 2011 census due to the current formula, this has negatively affected how they are able to provide services to their community. Libraries are used and valued in the north. In the face of different population growth rates between the northern and southern communities in our province MALT respectfully requests that your office review the current formula, make positive changes that ensure equitable and fair funding for libraries in Manitoba's North.

Flin Flon public library is serving its community with utmost efficiency and effectiveness in the face of decreased funding. In 2015 Flin Flon Public Library held 42 events, served 44,252 individuals, and circulated 26,543 books. In spite of funding cuts the Flin Flon Public Library provides service to a membership that continues to increase. Northern libraries in Manitoba also continue to take on the growing role of providing open access to computers, the internet, and technology in communities.

MALT is confident legislators recognize the merit in public libraries, and respectfully request methods be looked at to ensure Northern Libraries continue prosper as the hubs of their communities, and that services in the north are provided equitable and fair funding.

We look forward to your response on this matter,

The Manitoba Association of Library Technicians
MALT President Cassandra Page