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Mr. Michael Foderick, Chair
Toronto Public Library Board of Directors
789 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario M4W 2G8

January 8, 2015

Dear Michael Foderick,

On behalf of the over 2000 members of The Writers' Union of Canada (TWUC), I am writing to express TWUC's disappointment with the recently announced program for purchase of second-hand copies of books that will be put into the library's general circulation.

An author can dedicate a lifetime of professional work to a career without ever realizing the income from a single best-selling book. If and when that bestseller arrives, there can still be a painfully small sales window during which she might benefit from the book's popularity. Every sale of a new, royalty-generating book counts, including single-copy sales to libraries with high demand for popular titles.

As you must know, it is increasingly difficult for professional authors to make a living from the work of writing and publishing. The devaluation of our time, work and product is pervasive and pernicious. The TPL's second-hand buying program both encourages and participates in that devaluation by removing crucial royalty-generating institutional sales from an author's income, and by setting a ridiculously low price for what is essentially a new book.

Canada's professional authors are among the strongest advocates of the public library system in this country. We consider libraries our partners. Many Canadian authors work in the library system, and many more volunteer our time to library causes and programs. We recognize that library budgets are under pressure, but devaluing the books at the core of your work is not a solution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Harry Thurston'.

Harry Thurston, Chair