



:. ontario library association

Hon. Michael Chan
Minister of Tourism and Culture
Hearst Block, 9th Floor
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2E1

December 8, 2011

Dear Minister Chan,

On behalf of the public library community we would like to thank you for your assurances that there will be no changes to the public libraries act to permit fees as was suggested to the media by Toronto city councilors.

Since the Free Public Libraries Act was passed, 130 years ago, Ontarians, regardless of their means or abilities, have been able to count on their public library as the one place where they can access resources to meet their informational, educational and recreational need.

The free public library is a lynchpin:

- of our democratic society as everybody can access balanced accounts of fact, opinion and creative expression. Everyone can be as informed as they choose to be.
- for maintaining community well-being. Even those with the least resources in community can find recreational material to refresh their spirit. Even those who are most marginalized can find a safe place to feel some connection with their community.
- for fostering literacy. Even recreational books and videos promote literacy and cultural engagement.

Ontario Library Association (OLA) members will continue to inform and engage with municipal decision makers so that ideas for public libraries will be in the best interest of our communities. We thank you for your continued support of Ontario's public libraries.

Sincerely,

Tanis Fink, President, Ontario Library Association

Cc

Paul Ainslie, Chair, Toronto Public Library Board

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