

CFLA-FCAB Statement Bill-28

Statement of the Canadian Federation of Library Associations- Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (CFLA-FCAB) on Alberta's Bill 28

May 1, 2026

Whereas the Government of Alberta has justified Bill 28 by claiming the need to restrict "visual depictions of sex" from youth aged 15 and under, a claim that mischaracterizes the role and practices of public libraries and asserts a systemic problem where none has been demonstrated.

Whereas Alberta's public libraries have served their communities effectively and accountably for decades, with a recent poll confirming that 82% of Albertans trust their local libraries to make appropriate collection decisions.

Whereas Bill 28 would strip decision-making autonomy from local library boards despite municipalities providing the majority of library funding and hand unprecedented control to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Whereas concentrating this authority threatens the privacy of library users by allowing minister-appointed inspectors to potentially examine private borrowing records, risks discouraging free access to information, and introduces political interference.

Whereas there is no evidence of systemic failure in Alberta's public libraries to justify this level of government overreach.

CFLA affirms that local governance, trained library professionals, and community accountability are what make Alberta's public libraries work. Trust is earned through consistency and transparency, not government overreach.

Therefore, CFLA calls on the Government of Alberta to withdraw all sections of Bill 28 that apply to the Libraries Act.

CFLA calls on municipal leaders and library boards to defend local governance and speak up for the communities they fund and serve.

CFLA calls on library users across Canada to exercise and defend their fundamental right to privacy, and their right to seek information freely.

CFLA calls on all parties to ground dialogue in evidence, accountability, and respect for the communities that public libraries exist to serve.