



606-100 Arthur Street
Winnipeg, MB R3B 1H3

Winnipeg, May 4th, 2026

Office of the Premier
307 Legislature Building
10800-97 Avenue
Edmonton Alberta T5K 2B6

Subject: Opposition to Bill 28 and Defense of Local Library Governance

Dear Premier Smith and Minister Williams,

On behalf of the Manitoba Library Association, we are writing to express our deep concern regarding Alberta's Bill 28 and its implications for intellectual freedom, local governance, and the integrity of public library systems.

While this legislation is being considered beyond Manitoba's borders, its potential impact resonates nationally. Public libraries across Canada share a common foundation rooted in local accountability, professional expertise, and a commitment to equitable access to information. We therefore stand in strong support of the positions advanced by the Coalition of Alberta Public Libraries and the Canadian Federation of Library Associations-Federation canadienne des associations de bibliothèques.

As emphasized by CFLA-FCAB, public trust in libraries is built through consistent, transparent, and community-driven governance. Bill 28 introduces provisions that risk undermining this trust by concentrating authority at the provincial level and enabling intervention that bypasses local library boards. Such measures weaken the role of trained library professionals, diminish community voice, and raise serious concerns regarding intellectual freedom and user privacy.

Libraries are among the most trusted public institutions in Canada. This trust is not accidental—it is the result of governance structures that are responsive to local needs and grounded in democratic principles. Granting broad discretionary powers to a single minister to intervene in library operations, including access to records, represents a significant departure from these principles.

From our perspective in Manitoba, we stand in solidarity with our colleagues in Alberta and across the country in affirming that public libraries must remain spaces free from political

interference. They are essential community hubs where individuals can explore ideas, access information, and engage in lifelong learning without fear of censorship or surveillance.

We respectfully urge the Government of Alberta to reconsider and withdraw the provisions of Bill 28 that impact the Libraries Act, and to uphold the longstanding principles that have guided public library governance in Canada.

Sincerely,



Brigitte L'Heureux
Executive Director
On behalf of the Manitoba Library Association