

23 February, 2011

Jefferson Gilbert, Executive Director  
The Canadian Urban Libraries Council  
2006 Queen Street East, No. 7,  
Toronto, ON M4L 1J3

Dear Mr. Gilbert,

As you are aware, during the past 18 months, CNIB has worked closely with Canada's federal and provincial governments to secure interim funding for the CNIB Library, Canada's largest producer of alternative-format material. During the same time period, CNIB has been one among many stakeholders to provide input into the development of a new service model for the delivery of a nationwide accessible library services to all Canadians who cannot read print due to disability.

In addition to the interim funding secured to date from five provinces, I am pleased to let you know that we have received official confirmation from the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skill Development, that our proposal for two years of interim federal funding of the CNIB Library has been granted. This funding will be designated towards the expansion of the library collection and capital investments designed to enhance services for patrons and public library partners. A public announcement was made today, February 23 in Toronto.

This development will ensure that the CNIB Library collection and infrastructure can be maintained and enhanced until such time as a sustainable, equitable, nationwide library service for all people with print disabilities is put into place.

The creation of such a service remains CNIB's objective, and we wish to make clear that we view the federal government's interim investment as neither a solution nor a substitute. So, in keeping with our commitment to the principles outlined in the Canadian Library

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Association's report, 'Opening the Book' we will continue to work towards a new service model in the vein of IELA<sup>1</sup>.

Building the long-term solution will require an active and engaged partnership among all levels of government, public libraries, publishers, end users and national organizations representing people with print disabilities. You and your organization are key to that process, and we hope you will continue to help shape this important agenda and aggressively move it forward.

With that in mind, we would appreciate the opportunity to connect with you in the coming weeks to speak in greater detail about the next steps in creating a sustainable, equitable, nationwide library service for all people with print disabilities. My colleague Cathy Moore will be following up with you directly to set up a time for our organizations to connect.

Sincerely,



John M. Rafferty  
President and CEO  
CNIB

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<sup>1</sup> Initiative for Equitable Library Access  
<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/iela/index-e.html>



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