



MEDIA RELEASE

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Library cuts astounding

REGINA, SK — Members of the Friends of the Regina Public Library were astounded by the Saskatchewan government's recent announcement of budget cuts to city and regional libraries.

The cut to Regina Public Library was significant – about 3% of the budget. The cuts to the regional library systems will have a devastating impact on those libraries.

What is most dismaying is the attitude of the Saskatchewan Minister of Education, who in his remarks seemed to have a complete lack of understanding of the value of libraries as learning centres and places for community and as centres for the access to information and public discourse which are a cornerstone of our democracy; and conveyed a dismissive attitude to the wonderful legacy of libraries and the connections between libraries that has been built up in Saskatchewan, which is admired all across Canada.

Libraries are a destination location providing not only books, DVD's and many other resources, they are also a place of quiet for study for children and adults and a technology hub for people who do not have ready access to computers and the Internet elsewhere. People study for school or training and do research for work and business opportunities. They access materials that stimulate imagination and creativity. Newcomers to Canada can find resources, in many languages. Libraries today have many ways of accommodating the requirements of people with challenges in seeing, hearing and mobility. Libraries have resources and programs responding to Indigenous culture. Small local libraries, built up often by the pioneering efforts of rural women, are an important part of the community fabric in small towns throughout the province. As well, northern communities need these valued resources to build hope for the youth of this province.

FRPL calls upon the government to rescind these cuts. In a time of social change in this province, libraries are too important of a resource to be cutting their budgets and callously dismissing their value. The rapid and strong response to this action shows the high value the people of Saskatchewan put in their libraries.

FRPL is encouraging people to write to their MLA, sign the two petitions that are being sent to the provincial government, and participate in events such as the province-wide read-in to be held on April 7.

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