



Canadian Library Association Says Copyright Legislation “Almost There”

User Rights Still Tempered by Digital Locks

(Ottawa, September 29, 2011) – The Canadian Library Association (CLA) is pleased to see the re-introduction of copyright legislation in the House of Commons. The fact that this legislation has been introduced so early in the session shows there is a real commitment from the Government to this issue. Following the much anticipated re-introduction of the *Copyright Modernization Act*, CLA says a few important modifications are still needed in order to address the concerns of the library community.

CLA acknowledges the complexity of copyright in the 21st century, and the Government’s attempt to balance the concerns of creators and content providers with those in the public interest. What the bill needs now is to reflect an acceptable balance from the users’ perspective without interference to statutory rights.

Librarians across the country understand that copyright laws must reflect the public interest.

“It is very positive to see the re-introduction of copyright legislation, as this remains a key concern for the library community,” says CLA President Karen Adams. “We are happy to see that improvements introduced in the last bill have been maintained; however, modifications are required if the legislation is to ultimately succeed in its objectives, those being both balanced and technologically neutral.”

CLA is pleased that Canadians with perceptual disabilities will have use of material in accessible formats imported from other jurisdictions. The presence of education, parody and satire in the fair dealing section of the Act is also applauded. CLA’s main concern is the unnecessarily proscriptive protections for digital locks, which dramatically limit the additions and reduce the impact of the exceptions to fair dealing. “Legislation which does not include the right to bypass digital locks for non-infringing purposes is fundamentally flawed,” says CLA Copyright Committee Chair Victoria Owen. “We are seeking an improvement in the language regarding technological measures and the removal of constraints to non-infringing activity.”

The library community plays a vital role in providing Canadians access to all forms of material. This access to information is integral to ensuring that Canadians are regular contributors to the economic, social and cultural well-being of their communities.

“We must continue to work together with government, and CLA is committed to doing so, to develop balanced copyright legislation that is in the public interest,” concludes Adams.

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The Canadian Library Association/Association canadienne des bibliothèques (CLA) is Canada’s largest national and broad-based library association, representing the interests of public, academic, school and special libraries, professional librarians and library workers, and all those concerned about enhancing the quality of life of Canadians through information and literacy.

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