



CLA Response to Federal Budget 2015

April 28, 2015

On April 21, 2015 Minister Joe Oliver released his federal Budget for 2015 entitled [*Strong Leadership: A Balanced-Budget, Low-Tax Plan For Jobs, Growth and Security*](#). Included in the budget were two measures that directly affect the library community. CLA is very pleased with the proposed amendments to the Copyright Act to implement and accede to the *Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled*. The CLA is concerned however with the proposed amendments to the Copyright Act so that the term of protection of performances and sound recordings is extended from 50 years to 70 years following the date of the release of the sound recordings.

CLA was very pleased to join the Minister of Industry, The Honourable James Moore on April 27th as he announced that Canada will join the Marrakesh Treaty which is designed to make reading materials more available for individuals who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled. The Government is set to table the Treaty in the House of Commons on April 29, 2015. Canada will become the first of the G7 countries to implement the Marrakesh Treaty.

The CLA advocates for accessible materials for all Canadians and is pleased that Canadians with limitations to access print materials will soon see more materials become available making it easier for them to pursue educational endeavours and employment opportunities.

Contrary to the improvement to the lives of Canadians that the signing of the Marrakesh Treaty brings, the proposed amendment to the Copyright Act regarding sound recordings will inhibit access to sound recordings and performance. Extending the term of copyright from 50 to 70 years from the date of release is both unnecessary and may cost Canadians a significant amount of money. CLA would urge the government not to implement these amendments to the Act. Canadians should have access to cultural content.

CLA notes that the music industry did not raise serious concerns over the term of Copyright on sound and performance materials during the 2012 Copyright Reform Act, nor did they raise concerns during the 2014 Canadian Heritage committee study on the industry.¹

The government should allow for public consultation and open discussion before implementing such restrictions on content which may provide little revenue to the artists.

CLA congratulates the federal government on continuing to improve the Copyright Act through means such as the signing of the Marrakesh Treaty but cautions against taking two steps forward and two steps back by simultaneously introducing measures to extend the term of copyright on sound recordings and performance.

.../2

¹ The Great Canadian Copyright Giveaway: Why Copyright Term Extension for Sound Recordings Could Cost Consumers Millions, Michael Geist, 2015: <http://goo.gl/lkvuzp>

The Canadian Library Association/Association canadienne des bibliothèques (CLA/ACB) is the national voice for Canada's library communities, representing the interests of libraries, library workers, and all those concerned about enhancing the quality of life of Canadians through information and literacy. CLA/ACB represents 1410 library workers, libraries and library supporters; and Canadian libraries serve in excess of 34 million Canadians through the nation's public, school, academic, government and special libraries.

For more information, please visit www.cla.ca.