



**Conservative Party of Canada
1204-130 Albert St.
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5G4**

September 30, 2015

Re: The growing Cost of eBooks to Public Libraries

Dear Prime Minister Harper,

On behalf of the Canadian Library Association I would like to bring your attention to an issue affecting all Canadians: that of eBook pricing models for Canadian libraries. In recent years, Canadian libraries are seeing a tremendous growth in demand for e-books from their users. In fact, it is the fastest growing area of many libraries' circulations. Unfortunately, libraries are at a disadvantage accessing much of the e-content at a reasonable price.

The big 5 multinational publishers (Hachette, MacMillan, Penguin Random House, Simon and Schuster, Random House, Harper Collins) treat libraries differently than regular consumers with e-books, unfairly charging substantially more and/or limiting how long libraries can keep titles. It should be noted that Canadian independent publishers are working well with libraries.

To give you one example: John Grisham's *Gray Mountain*, published by Penguin Random House retails at \$15.99 for an eBook copy, while librarians see the cost for the same as \$85.00.

Canadians Libraries are calling on your party to step in and help implement a systemic solution, such as legislative or regulatory reform. This is a no-cost issue that offers tremendous opportunity for a popular action from a returning government. The issue of eBook fairness affects all libraries large and small putting unnecessary strain on budgets. Libraries are simply advocating for a flexible model to provide these materials for users. This could include a mix of perpetual copies that libraries can use forever and time-limited licenses for a title's initial rush of popularity.

Canadian Public Libraries for Fair Ebook Pricing launched a [campaign](#) this summer to raise awareness of the high prices multinational publishers charge public libraries for eBooks. The campaign generated extensive media coverage across North America and an active dialogue on social media, indicating strong public interest in addressing this issue.

On behalf of the Canadian Library Association, I encourage your party to commit to revising current legislation which allows inflated eBook pricing to gouge Canadian libraries. Enclosed you will find more information about the status of eBook pricing for Canadian public libraries.

The Canadian Library Association / Association canadienne des bibliothèques (CLA/ACB) is the national voice for Canada's library communities. We certainly hope your party will address this unnecessary inflation and support fair eBook pricing for all Canadians.

To learn more please visit: <http://www.fairpricingforlibraries.org/> Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Valoree McKay".

Valoree McKay, CAE
Executive Director, Canadian Library Association