

Valoree McKay

From: CorrespondenceMinister@ic.gc.ca
Sent: May-15-15 10:28 AM
To: Valoree McKay
Subject: Correspondence from the Minister of Industry

Dear Ms. DeYoung and Ms. McKay:

I am pleased to provide you an update on our government's work to improve access to copyright material for persons who are visually impaired or print disabled. I am sending you this update because we have previously communicated regarding the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled.

As an international agreement, the Marrakesh Treaty requires member countries to provide certain exceptions to national copyright laws in order to allow for the adaptation of print materials, including books, textbooks and magazines, into accessible formats for the visually impaired and print disabled, such as braille and audio book formats. Further, it provides for the distribution of accessible format copies, including across international or sovereign borders. The Treaty will help facilitate the cross-border sharing of resources among organizations that work with the blind and visually impaired.

Canada played an important role in the negotiations to finalize the Marrakesh Treaty at the WIPO diplomatic conference in June 2013. Our government welcomed the successful conclusion of the Treaty as a positive step to advance the objective of improving access. On April 21, 2015, our government was pleased to announce that the *Copyright Act* will be amended to align with the obligations of the Treaty. The amendments to the *Copyright Act* will enable Canada to accede to the Treaty. These amendments will build on the important reforms put in place through the 2012 *Copyright Modernization Act*.

The Treaty will enter into force once 20 eligible parties have ratified or acceded to it. To date, eight countries – El Salvador, India, Mali, the United Arab Emirates, Singapore, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay – have ratified or acceded to the Treaty. Once in force, the Marrakesh Treaty will help improve access to print materials, and will give blind and visually impaired Canadians greater opportunity to participate in Canadian society and the Canadian workforce.

Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

The Honourable James Moore, P.C., M.P.