



## **2014 Advocacy Review for the Canadian Library Association December 12, 2014**

2014 has been a year of transformation and we have been very busy on the advocacy front! From a Canada AM appearance, to Member of Parliament engagement throughout the year, to preparation for a final budget before the next federal election, CLA has been the voice of Canadian Libraries on many fronts. During the inaugural year with Ms. Valoree McKay at the helm, there has also been much strategic planning, policy shaping and review. Valoree participated in a one-on-one advocacy review with government relations firm Impact Public Affairs, and also received personalized media training. Here is an overview of how CLA and Impact Public Affairs have worked in tandem to put forth a strong voice for library communities across the country over the past year:

### **National Conference**

During the National Conference and Trade Show in June, Huw Williams led an advocacy bootcamp that included a political overview, tips and tricks for successful advocacy and mock MP meeting sessions. This boot camp is an important tool to empower members of CLA to be strong advocates for the library community.

### **Canadian Library Month**

Small packages were sent to each MP and Senator to promote Canadian Library Month. The outreach included a declaration that MPs were invited to sign. Many MPs also took photos of themselves signing the declarations. Those photos and signed declarations were then shared via social media thereby broadening awareness about Canadian Library Month. Also, CLA promoted the Edmonton Public Library's win of the Library of the Year Award by coordinating a tour by Senator Unger. Senator Black also read a statement in the Senate to congratulate the EPL.

### **Official CLA Statements**

CLA continues to monitor both the media and political activities to ensure library values are maintained. Through this monitoring CLA has issued a number of official statements on a wide variety of issues. A sample of the statement topics include:

- The Funding of Prison Libraries
- Budget Cuts to Statistics Canada and the Long Form Census (Bill C-626)
- Bill C-13, Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act
- Rural broadband access
- A response to the Royal Society Report of libraries

### **Library and Archives Canada Budget Cuts**

CLA has been monitoring transition and budget cuts to Library and Archives Canada. This year, Dr. Guy Berthiaume was appointed the new Librarian and Archivist of Canada. CLA has met with Dr. Berthiaume a number of times and continues to build a relationship with an important partner in the library community. Also, CLA has actively pursued the government to revisit departmental library closures, and to consult the library community for input from experts in the consolidation and digitization of material. CLA remains concerned in the lack of transparency and involvement of experts in this process. CLA remains committed to encouraging access to information for all Canadians. In this light, they have also participated in the Open Government consultations.

### **Open Government**

The Federal Government, lead by Minister Tony Clement, President of the Treasury Board, launched Canada's Action Plan on Open Government. The CLA's Information Policy Advisory Committee and the Government Information Network, lead a response focused on CLA's values of openness and access to information. CLA issued a comment in October on the initial report and continues to monitor the implementation of the Open Government plan. This month, a letter outlining CLA's position will be distributed to each Member of Parliament.

### **Copyright**

The CLA Copyright Committee had an in depth discussion in October to determine the Copyright priorities for CLA leading into the federal election. A full advocacy plan is currently under review and will be implemented beginning in January. Goals include finding champions in each caucus, raising the profile of copyright with key stakeholders such as the media, and putting copyright on the election platform.

### **Pre Budget Consultations**

This month, a second phase of pre-budget consultations was launched asking Canadians to answer a number of questions about job creation, economic growth, and fiscal responsibility. CLA will prepare a response highlighting the importance of investing in libraries to support job seekers and skill development, the economic growth benefits to small businesses, researchers and Canadians in general and the critical infrastructure libraries provide to communities.

CLA looks forward to a busy year that will see a strong advocacy direction supported by our committees, members and Executive Committee. We will continue to provide a strong voice on library issues and to promote libraries values at the core of messaging.