

7 AUGUST, 2026
SOUTHERN INTERIOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
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250-851-6653 INFO@SILGA.CA

HONOURABLE CHRISTINE BOYLE
MINISTER OF HOUSING AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS
PO BOX 9236 STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA, B.C. V8W 9J1



Dear Minister Boyle,

Re: Capital Funding Program and Advisory Body for Libraries

On behalf of the Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA), whose governing Executive represents 37 municipalities and regional districts across British Columbia's Southern Interior, I am writing to the Province to request urgent attention to the growing need for investment into the Province's libraries. We are disappointed to hear that the Province has recently issued a cut to urban library funding in the Central Okanagan as opposed to the necessary increases to protect all libraries in the Province's 71 library systems.

Although libraries are primarily funded by local governments, \$14 million annually from the Province also serves as a core funding source for British Columbia's libraries. This amount has not increased since the year 2010 despite a 30% population increase and 35% inflation. Despite massive increases to their base operations costs, libraries continue to punch above their weight by providing numerous community services otherwise not available to the wider public. These include, but are not limited to, heating and cooling centres, reconciliation and Indigenous education, and myriad supports for residents on topics spanning the gamut from technological literacy to mental health and seed gardens to housing. These service innovations are increasingly becoming expectations, yet libraries have no new funding - rather, they have significantly less than they did two decades ago - from which to draw to meet these expectations.

Therefore, the Southern Interior echoes UBCM's 2025-SR3, as well as the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services and the BC Public Library Partners, in urging the province to immediately and substantially increase libraries' annual core funding to \$30 million, with provisions to index this amount in accordance with both inflationary and population increases.

Further, we request the province expedite actions necessary to establish a capital funding program for local governments to facilitate upgrades to library infrastructure, and to create an advisory body under Section 52(1) of the *Library Act* to review the Province's library funding models to ensure our libraries remain a robust public service with room to innovate on accessibility, education, and public safety.

We look forward to hearing the Province's plans to support the longevity of libraries across British Columbia and humbly request your sincere consideration of our three action items.

Sincerely,

Bill Sarai, President

Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA)