

**NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION
OF MUNICIPALITIES**

March 5, 2019

The Honourable Leo Glavine
Minister of Communities, Culture & Heritage
P. O. Box 456, Station Centre
Halifax, NS B3J 2R5

Dear Minister Glavine:

RE: MUNICIPAL CONCERNS REGARDING LIBRARY FUNDING REVIEW

I am writing on behalf of the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) Board of Directors to express our concern with the new funding model for libraries. On 22 February 2019, Deputy Minister Taweel, her team, and representatives from the Library Boards Association of Nova Scotia (LBANS) presented the proposed plan to our Board of Directors. We agree that a review of library funding is long overdue and we applaud the Nova Scotia government for taking steps to secure the future of these important community institutions. Regrettably, however, it is our position that this funding model was developed without consideration of the Partnership Framework between NSFM and the Department of Municipal Affairs and without adequate involvement of municipalities.

While we appreciate that some municipal elected officials were present during funding discussions, their participation and interests were as library board members, not representatives of Nova Scotia's municipal units. NSFM, however, has a long and effective history of being involved in library funding reviews, and, as the united voice of municipal interests, are disappointed we were not asked to participate in recent discussions. As such, we request that the current library funding review—and all future reviews—give municipalities equal standing at the decision-making table as key stakeholders throughout the process.

With regards the current proposal, NSFM has concerns with the impact it will have on municipal units. Some municipalities, including Halifax, have already met or exceeded the proposed municipal funding levels, and we believe they should be exempt from further increases. Other municipalities are projected to see as much as a 41 per cent increase in funding over a single year. While good intentioned, the proposal will place significant financial pressure on already tight budgets. We also encourage the province to include ongoing operating cost for

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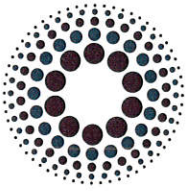
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library spaces that are owned or operated by municipalities when calculating total financial contributions.

Municipalities place great value on the services and supports libraries provide to our citizens. They are a gathering place where residents connect, engage with their communities, participate in programs and access technology. They also offer a safe, warm and welcoming space for everyone. It is because municipalities recognize the importance of our libraries and want to ensure they can provide sustainable funding for the future, that stronger communication and engagement be instituted to find the right model.

We eagerly look forward to hearing how NSFM will be further engaged during this library funding review.

Sincerely,

Councillor Waye Mason
President, NSFM

WM/tv

cc: Warden Jimmy MacAlpine, President, LBANS
Mr. Alain Muise, President, AMANS
The Honourable Chuck Porter, Minister, Department of Municipal Affairs