



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canadian Publishers Condemn Alberta's Proposed Restrictions on Public Library Materials

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The Association of Canadian Publishers (ACP), the Canadian Publishers' Council (CPC), and the Literary Press Group of Canada (LPG) strongly condemn the Government of Alberta's introduction of legislation that would restrict access to certain books in public libraries. Framed as a measure to limit young people's exposure to "sexually explicit" images, the proposed law risks undermining the core principles of public libraries: open access to information, intellectual freedom, and trust in professional expertise.

[Under the proposed legislation in Bill 28](#), materials deemed to contain visual depictions of sexual activity could be removed from general circulation and placed behind counters or in restricted areas, limiting access for those aged 15 and under. While presented as a safeguard, this approach introduces vague and subjective criteria that place an unnecessary administrative burden on library systems and staff, while restricting access to legitimate works of literature.

Public libraries are staffed by trained professionals who are well equipped to make informed, context-sensitive decisions about collections and age-appropriate access. Given that young people already navigate a vast and largely unregulated digital landscape, where content is frequently more explicit than that found in books, it is misplaced to focus scrutiny on public library collections. As with the government's earlier directive affecting school libraries, this approach imposes a top-down framework without meaningful consultation. [The Coalition of Alberta Public Libraries has confirmed](#) that none of its members were consulted in the development of Bill 28.

The school library restrictions introduced by the Alberta Government earlier this year have shown that such measures can be resource-intensive and disproportionately

affect works that address complex themes or diverse perspectives, including 2SLGBTQIA+ experiences. Similar outcomes are likely in public libraries, with Canadian-authored and published titles at risk of restriction.

“We are concerned to see yet another legislative effort in Alberta that limits access to information and interferes with the work of librarians,” said Alana Wilcox, President of the Association of Canadian Publishers. “Public libraries are vital spaces for learning and exploration, and their collections should be shaped by professional expertise, not broad and overreaching legislation.”

Beyond these provisions, [the bill also grants sweeping authority to the provincial government](#) to oversee and intervene in the management and operations of public libraries. Proposed measures would allow appointed inspectors to examine library practices and records, and enable the minister to issue orders on a wide range of matters. This level of control raises serious concerns about potential intrusion into library collections, operations, and user privacy.

ACP, CPC, and LPG call on the Government of Alberta to:

- Withdraw this legislation;
- Engage in meaningful consultation with public library systems, librarians, educators, and community stakeholders; and
- Respect the principles of intellectual freedom, professional expertise, and equitable access that underpin public libraries.

Restrictions on library materials ultimately constrain access to knowledge, sideline important perspectives, and weaken confidence in the institutions and professionals that support informed, engaged communities. We urge the Government of Alberta to reconsider this approach and stand in support of the librarians, authors, publishers, and community members across Alberta who are working to oppose these changes.

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ACP is the national voice of English-language Canadian-owned book publishers. ACP contributes to the development and maintenance of vibrant, competitive book publishing companies in order to support and strengthen the contribution that Canadian books make to Canada's cultural, economic, and educational landscape.

The Canadian Publishers' Council (CPC) represents the interests of publishing companies that publish books and other media for elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, professional and reference markets, and the retail and library sectors. CPC maintains liaison with major Canadian and international sector associations in writing and publishing, to monitor key developments in the sector and advocate for policies that promote a healthy and prosperous industry.

Founded in 1975, the Literary Press Group of Canada (LPG) is a not-for-profit association that represents Canadian-owned and -operated literary book publishers located across the country. LPG's members produce books by some of Canada's most innovative and creative writers, giving readers access to diverse voices that have not been well represented in mainstream publishing.

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