

October 18, 2019

Toronto Public Library Board
789 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario M4W 2G8

Dear Ms Graham-Nutter, Board Chair, and Board Members,

The Canadian Urban Library Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada members support Toronto Public Library's decision to allow a third-party to rent a theatre for an event at Toronto Public Library (TPL) in accordance with TPL Board policy. This Community and Event Space Rental policy states explicitly that: "Permission to use these facilities does not imply any endorsement of the aims, policies or activities of any group or individual." Additionally, the policy states: "The Library requires potential users of Community Space Rentals to confirm that they will not be conducting any business or activities that are in violation of 4.4(a)(i) of the policy, the Criminal Code of Canada (including hate propaganda laws) or the Ontario Human Rights Code."

Intellectual freedom and freedom of speech are essential to a democratic society, and public libraries must continue to protect these rights for all, even when views are contrary or offensive to many in the community.

Every individual, no matter what their background, opinions, and/or beliefs, has the right to freedom of expression and the right to access library services and spaces, providing their conduct complies with all applicable laws and library policies. These concepts are articulated in the Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries approved by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations / La Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques, and in TPL's values as endorsed by the TPL Board.

While it is recognized that some ideas expressed through library collections, programs, events and organizations that rent meeting rooms may, on occasion, be offensive to some or even many, it is imperative that public libraries continue to uphold the rights and values of intellectual freedom and freedom of expression which are fundamental to a democratic society.

Sincerely,



Pilar Martinez
Chair, Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (CULC/CBUC)
CEO, Edmonton Public Library, on behalf of:

Alvin M. Schrader, Professor Emeritus, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alberta

And the following members of CULC/CBUC:



Alberta

Mark Asberg, Chief Executive Officer, Calgary Public Library
Shelley Ross, Chief Executive Officer, Red Deer Public Library
Melissa Flett, Director, Wood Buffalo Regional Library

British Columbia

Beth Davies, Chief Librarian, Burnaby Public Library
Todd Gnisso, Executive Director, Coquitlam Public Library
Scott Hargrove, Chief Executive Officer, Fraser Valley Regional Library
Maureen Sawa, Chief Executive Officer, Greater Victoria Public Library
Don Nettleton, Chief Executive Officer, Okanagan Regional Library
Susan Walters, Chief Librarian, Richmond Public Library
Surinder Bhogal, Chief Librarian, Surrey Libraries
Rosemary Bonanno, Executive Director, Vancouver Island Regional Library
Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian, Vancouver Public Library

Manitoba

Ed Cuddy, Manager of Library Services, Winnipeg Public Library

New Brunswick

Sylvie Nadeau, Executive Director, New Brunswick Public Library Service

Nova Scotia

Åsa Kachan, Chief Librarian & Chief Executive Officer, Halifax Public Libraries

Ontario

Lauren Jessop, Chief Executive Officer, Barrie Public Library
Rebecca Raven, Chief Executive Officer, Brampton Library
Lita Barrie, Chief Executive Officer, Burlington Public Library
Steve Kraft, Chief Executive Officer, Guelph Public Library
Paul Takala, Chief Librarian, Hamilton Public Library
Helen Kelly, Chief Executive Officer, Idea Exchange – Cambridge
Lester Webb, Interim Chief Librarian & Chief Executive Officer, Kingston Frontenac Public Library
Mary Chevreau, Chief Executive Officer, Kitchener Public Library
Michael Ciccone, Chief Executive Officer, London Public Library
Catherine Biss, Chief Executive Officer, Markham Public Libraries
Mark Williams, Chief Librarian, Milton Public Library
Lori Kelly, Director, Mississauga Library System
Tara Wong, Chief Executive Officer, Oakville Public Library
Frances Newman, Chief Executive Officer, Oshawa Public Library
Danielle McDonald, Chief Executive Officer, Ottawa Public Library
Louise Procter Maio, Chief Executive Officer, Richmond Hill Public Library
Ken Su, Chief Executive Officer, St. Catharines Public Library
John Pateman, Chief Executive Officer, Thunder Bay Public Library
Margie Singleton, Chief Executive Officer, Vaughan Public Libraries
Laurie Clarke, Chief Executive Officer, Waterloo Public Library
Kitty Pope, Chief Executive Officer, Windsor Public Library

Quebec

Jean-François Roulier, Chef de division Planification et expertise, Bibliothèques de Laval
Ivan Filion, Directeur, Bibliothèque de Montréal
Martin Dubois, Directeur générale de la Grande Bibliothèque, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec
Carol Laguë, Chef de division, Bibliothèque municipale de Gatineau

Saskatchewan

Jeff Barber, Chief Executive Officer, Regina Public Library
Carol Cooley, Director of Libraries & Chief Executive Officer, Saskatoon Public Library

cc Jefferson Gilbert, Executive Director, Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (CULC/CBUC)
Vickery Bowles, City Librarian, Toronto Public Library