



Paul S. Takala  
Chief Librarian/CEO  
Hamilton Public Library  
55 York Blvd. Hamilton ON L8N 4E4  
[ptakala@hpl.ca](mailto:ptakala@hpl.ca) 905-546-3215

April 13, 2018

The Honorable Daiene Vernile  
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport  
9th Floor, Hearst Block  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2E1  
[Daiene.Vernile@ontario.ca](mailto:Daiene.Vernile@ontario.ca)

Dear Minister Vernile:

I am writing to extend our thanks to the Ontario Government for your recent funding increase to public libraries. Public libraries, like the Hamilton Public Library, support the goals of Ontario's Culture Strategy to promote cultural engagement and inclusion. We strengthen culture in communities, fuel the creative economy, and promote the value of the arts. Libraries are a source of pride in the communities we serve, contributing to social and cultural well-being by providing safe, inclusive, and vibrant community spaces where everyone is welcome to learn, work and connect.

The increased provincial investment in public libraries is welcome news to Hamilton. The City of Hamilton has provided consistent and generous support for the Hamilton Public Library. The City currently funds 94% of our operating budget. The provincial operating grant has remained fixed at \$949,451 per year since amalgamation in 2001, while consumer price inflation has increased by more than 35% during that time. Libraries like ours advance many provincial priorities like education, lifelong learning, culture and economic development so receiving strong provincial support is critical to supplementing the municipal investment.

The Hamilton Public Library embraces innovation and digital resources as we strive to maintain excellent physical collections. The news that the province is funding the creation of an Ontario Digital Library is welcome for many reasons. Firstly, collectively purchasing access to digital content enables significant cost savings and improves overall efficiency. Having access to shared resources also supports our ability to better partner with schools and the broader education sector. Finally, while a large urban library like the Hamilton Public can provide access to critical digital resources, many smaller rural and indigenous communities cannot. It is important that all Ontarians have access to resources to support their education, lifelong learning and personal well-being.

Again, the increased provincial investment in public libraries is welcome news and much appreciated. The funding will help us advance the learning and well being of the communities we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Takala', written in a cursive style.

Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO  
cc: Library Board, MPPs: Andrea Horwath, Ted McMeekin, Paul Miller, Monique Taylor.