



Hon. Ric McIver
Deputy Leader, Minister of Transportation and Minister of Municipal Affairs
Government of Alberta

Hon. Tyler Shandro
Minister of Health
Government of Alberta

Hon. Rajan Sawhney
Minister of Community and Social Services
Government of Alberta

February 26, 2021

Dear Ministers,

The Alberta Library Trustees Association hopes this letter finds you and yours safe and healthy. We would like to express our thanks to the Alberta government who are leading the Covid-19 response. As we continue to contend with the outbreak and continued uncertainty to our communities, we are grateful for the proactive measures put in place to maintain the health and safety of Alberta's residents.

Alberta Library Trustees Association acts as the collective voice for public library trustees across Alberta. Serving over 2400 volunteer library trustees and 165 library boards. It has come to our attention that library boards across the province have been advocating on behalf of their libraries to have their reopening moved to Stage 2 of the current path forward.

Alta requests that you review the concerns of our local library boards and thoughtfully consider this change.

Libraries remain essential to our strong quality of life in Alberta. They remain imperative in ensuring the most vulnerable community members have access to services that are essential to them:

- Access to internet and technology,
- Support in identifying social assistance and immigration services,
- Financial and mental health aids.

All the above needs have increased at the exact same time that supports have dwindled substantially since the closure announced on December 13, 2020. Prior to the closure public libraries ensured barrier free access to these resources in a safe and healthy environment.

Our library boards and professionals have shown their commitment to public safety by continuing to follow all provincial health guidelines and will continue to do so. Libraries follow strong risk mitigation procedures and have been effective in implementing strategies that include strict social distancing, sanitation, and reduced capacity protocols. This was demonstrated by the safe and effective reopening after the initial planned reopening in 2020. Library board trustees are committed to working closely with the Alberta Government and library staff to ensure libraries remain safe spaces for staff and users.

Our trustees look forward to working jointly to ensure all Albertans have access to the supports and services needed to participate in the economic recovery of our province. We hope the Alberta government will recognize the



importance of providing access to essential services to Albertans by reconsidering the decision to place libraries in Stage 3.

We appreciate your attention to this matter. Thank you.

Respectfully, .

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Anheliger", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jennifer Anheliger
President
Alberta Library Trustees Association