



Atlantic Provinces Library Association  
School of Information Management, Faculty of Management  
Kenneth C. Rowe Management Building  
6100 University Avenue  
Halifax, NS B3H 3J5

November 14, 2012

Mr. John Rafferty,  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
CNIB  
1929 Bayview Ave.  
Toronto ON M4G 3E8

John.Rafferty@cnib.ca

Dear Mr. Rafferty,

As the President of the Atlantic Provinces Library Association (APLA), I would like to express our members' support of your efforts to secure sustainable public funding for the conceptual plan outlined in *"Reading RE-Imagined: A National Digital HUB to support service delivery to Canadians with print disabilities."*

According to the Initiative for Equitable Library Access of Library and Archives Canada, an estimated 10% of Canadians live with a print disability (<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/iela/index-e.html>). This represents an estimated 24,000 citizens of Atlantic Canada. Members of APLA strive daily in their libraries to provide equitable service to the print disabled populations of our communities, but our collections and staff expertise are often limited. APLA members require the support of a national strategy to address these service gaps. There are moral, legal, and economic reasons to make such access a priority. We believe that it is unacceptable that print disabled Atlantic Canadians must rely on a charity while their sighted peers use publicly funded libraries.

The plan outlined in *Reading Reimagined* is built on many years of effort by the Canadian library community and consumer stakeholders as well as an extensive consultation process. It draws on models in other G8 countries with successful centralized, publicly funded HUBs for provision of alternative format materials and library services. It envisions a public-private not-for-profit organization that

- will give more access to more content, more consistently, to print disabled Canadians;



- will prevent duplication of costs by multiple jurisdictions;
- will support Public Libraries and other service points with training and outreach.
- will see production costs decrease as technology advances.

It is time to stop talking about a national Hub to make access to information a reality for all, and to start creating it. This conceptual model moves us in the right direction, and deserves government support.

Sincerely,

Lou Duggan  
President