

2205 Otter Point Road, Sooke, British Columbia, Canada V9Z 1J2

Phone: 250-642-1634 • Fax: 250-642-0541 • Email: info@sooke.ca • Website: www.sooke.ca

June 25, 2019

The Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister of Education
Via email: educ.minister@gov.bc.ca

Re: Public Library Funding

Dear Minister Fleming,

On behalf of the District of Sooke and its taxpayers, I join with the Union of BC Municipalities and local governments across British Columbia in urging the Ministry of Education to increase funding to public libraries to at least \$20 million in the 2020/21 provincial budget.

A decade ago, the Ministry cut library funding from \$17.9 million to \$13.7 million. Since then, there have been small adjustments that have taken the current annual sum to \$14 million, and yet inflation in BC has totaled 15.58% over this period.

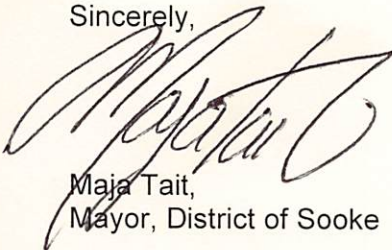
If the 2009 funding level had been maintained and inflationary increases incorporated, the annual provincial funding for public libraries would now equal \$20,688,820.

The Ministry of Education received a \$500 million increase in 2019/2020, however no adjustment was made to the Libraries Branch funding for libraries.

As you're aware, the UBCM has consistently endorsed resolutions calling on the Province to maintain and increase its funding for public libraries.

We appreciate the provincial government's recognition of this issue and are heartened that we all share the understanding of the need for adequate and reliable provincial funding for public libraries.

Sincerely,



Maja Tait,
Mayor, District of Sooke

Cc: Premier John Horgan, via email: premier@gov.bc.ca
Brenda Leigh, Chair - VIRL Board, via email: bleigh.53@gmail.com
Rosemary Bonanno, Executive Director – VIRL, via email: RBonanno@virl.bc.ca
Select Standing Committee, via email: FinanceCommittee@leg.bc.ca
BC Public Library Partners, via email: 20Million2020@gmail.com
Jennifer McCrea, Ministry of Education, via email: EDUC.learningdivision@gov.bc.ca
Mari Martin, Director, Libraries Branch, via email: llb@gov.bc.ca