



Canadian Association of University Teachers
Association canadienne des professeurs et professeurs d'université

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August 25, 2011

Dr. Patrick Deane
President
McMaster University
Gilmour Hall, Room 238
McMaster University
1280 Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario
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Dear President Deane:

The presence of libraries and librarians in a community represents a societal commitment to the public accessibility of knowledge. For this reason the recent attack on municipal libraries and librarians by the City of Toronto's government is truly alarming. It is an assault on reading and learning and on democracy itself.

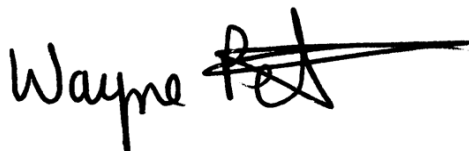
It is also a course of action that is reflective of events at McMaster University where your administration has terminated the careers of librarians, eliminated librarian positions, replaced librarians with contract technicians and removed professional responsibilities from the librarians who remain. This does a disservice to your academic community, because the work of academic librarians is the foundation upon which the core institutional activities of knowledge creation and knowledge transmission are built. It is particularly destructive because at a time of rapid technological and cultural change it is librarians who have led the transition from print to digital resources and have advocated on behalf of the entire university community for rational copyright legislation, policies and practice; for the principles of open access; and for sustainable platforms of digital scholarship.

It is perhaps not surprising that opportunistic municipal politicians would target libraries and librarians. What is unexpected is that a steward of higher learning would follow a similar path. We urge you to reconsider the course of action now underway at McMaster. The policy to hire contract employees to replace full-time academic librarians is a repudiation of everything that

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universities must stand for. McMaster faces a stark choice between thoughtfully moving forward with the delivery of knowledge or, through management gimmicks and ill-considered cost savings measures, destroying a legacy of success.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Wayne D. Peters in black ink. The signature is stylized, with the first name 'Wayne' clearly legible and a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Wayne D. Peters
President

Handwritten signature of Francesca Holyoke in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Francesca Holyoke
Chair, CAUT Librarians Committee

/mmp