



Corporate Services

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ORL Draft Resolution - request for support Public Library Funding

Recommendation:

THAT the Regional Board receives, for information, the request from the Okanagan Regional Library requesting support at the 2022 UBCM Convention with respect to a request for increased funding for public libraries.

Background:

The Okanagan Regional Library (ORL) is requesting that the RDCO submit a resolution to UBCM on public library funding. A copy of the ORL's request is attached.

Provincial funding for libraries has been frozen for over a decade and received very little adjustment for many years prior. The ORL has seen the municipal portions of our budget increasing from the low 70% of our budget to close to the mid 90% of our budgets over the past twenty-five (25) years. The ORL believes similar results would apply to most libraries in the province.

There have been resolutions over the past several years that have been brought forward both by municipal governments and also through presentations to the provincial budget committees. Though these have been acknowledged and included in recommendations from the budget committee to the government, the provincial government has not taken action and funding has remained frozen. The estimated gap just from lost inflation is now likely 8-10 million per year.

The Association of BC Public Library Directors and the BC Library partners, which includes the BC Library Trustees association, represent all the municipal and regional public libraries in the province. Their intent is to have a resolution of support for greater provincial funding forwarded by as many cities and towns and regional governments as possible.

The ORL Board agreed that each member community would have to choose which way this would come forward as they are wanting it to be passed, forwarded along, and strongly endorsed at UBCM and then to the province.

SILGA has received multiple resolutions from other local governments on the same topic and will be combining them into one resolution for consideration at the SILGA Meeting in April. As multiple resolutions are not necessary or recommended, support for the resolution can be provided by the RDCO delegates at the SILGA convention.