

NEWS RELEASE

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OTTAWA – June 13, 2008: NEW COPYRIGHT BILL REQUIRES CAREFUL STUDY

Bill C-61, An Act to amend the Copyright Act, is large, complicated and detailed. In January 2008 the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) released a statement on “A Canadian Approach to Digital Copyright.” A key element of that statement was that “to compete nationally and internationally, researchers in Canada require a fair and balanced copyright regime that recognizes the importance of users’ rights. Users’ rights must not be limited or narrowed in the digital environment.”

The CARL statement advocates that:

- Fair dealing is critical to a balanced and fair copyright regime. Copyright law reform must not limit or narrow fair dealing.
- A change in the law should ensure that a user of a copyrighted work is not subject to damages, where he or she had reasonable grounds to believe that an activity is fair dealing.
- Circumventing technical measures that prevent access or copying should be permitted if the purpose of the circumvention is not an infringement of copyright.
- The *Copyright Act* should be amended to provide that students, teachers and educational institutions do not infringe copyright when they use publicly available material on the Internet for educational purposes.

We are pleased that Bill C-61 addresses the educational use of the Internet. Based upon an initial reading we are concerned, however, that the bill may undermine the carefully crafted balance in the *Copyright Act*. For example, the bill’s proposals on technical measures may unduly limit and narrow users’ rights.

CARL will review the bill in more detail in the coming weeks and will make submissions to the ministers of Industry and Canadian Heritage over the summer.

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CARL is the leadership organization for the Canadian research library community. The Association’s members are the 27 major academic research libraries across Canada plus Library and Archives Canada, the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI), and the Library of Parliament.

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