

April 2, 2025

The Honourable François-Philippe Champagne
Minister of Finance

RE: The Impact to Libraries from the Intent to Impose Counter Tariffs

Sent via email: consultations@fin.gc.ca

Dear Minister Champagne,

The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) is a bilingual, not-for-profit organization that provides leadership and strategic collaboration for its membership which includes the 29 major Canadian university libraries and three federal libraries. CARL and its member libraries are very concerned about the potential ramifications of the government's proposed retaliatory tariffs on books, journals, periodicals, textbooks, and other printed materials (items 4901.10.00, 4901.91.00, 4901.99.00, 4902.10.00, 4902.90.00, 4903.00.00) and asks that libraries are granted an exemption from the tariffs on these goods.

Research libraries play a pivotal role in providing access to information and scholarship to tens of thousands of faculty and the over 2 million students studying in higher education institutions in Canada, a population that is integral to driving Canada's innovation and the economy. Despite the large-scale shift towards digital delivery of content, academic libraries still purchase and lend physical books, with some of our member libraries dedicating upwards of 15% of their collections budgets towards the purchase of print materials. As a result our libraries will be greatly impacted by the proposed 25% tariff on print books and it could result in millions of dollars in additional costs. Compounded by provincial budget cuts and a weak Canadian dollar, these tariffs pose a significant challenge to libraries in upholding their collections mandate and will interfere with the ability of Canada's universities to meet and advance their research and education agendas.

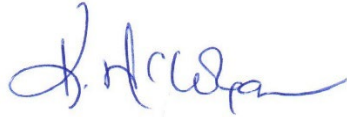
The impact to students cannot be overlooked as they will be faced with additional costs when purchasing textbooks and other educational resources, which has already been noted to be unaffordable to most.

It is also important to clarify that these tariffs are unlikely to have any positive outcome for Canadian creators, including authors of research and educational materials. Scholarly materials are largely non-fungible, and libraries are not in a position to find Canadian made alternatives to critical research and teaching materials generated in the US, forcing libraries to reduce the amount of educational materials they can purchase to support teaching and learning.

Furthermore, the Canadian and US publishing sectors are very intertwined. Often, Canadian creators choose to publish with US-based publishers, and many Canadian publishers use US-based facilities for the production and printing of their materials. As a result, Canadian creators and publishers will be negatively impacted inadvertently by the proposed potential tariffs.

CARL's members' library collections are crucial to Canadian education, scholarship, innovation and the economy and we ask that you provide an exemption for books, journals, periodicals, textbooks, and other printed materials.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. McColgan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Katherine McColgan
Acting Executive Director