



## Association of Library Professionals (ALP) Stands with Canceled Canadian Librarian

For Immediate Release

Thurs, 3/28/2024

### ALP President, C. Erik Wilkinson, Calls On NOTL Public Library Board to Reinstate Cathy Simpson

MANHATTAN, KANSAS —On March 21, 2024, the Library Board of Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library in Ontario, Canada terminated its Library CEO, Cathy Simpson. Their justification for this decision related to a February 22nd op-ed piece submitted by Simpson to *The Lake Report*, a local paper in the area. The article entitled, "Censorship and What We Are Allowed to Read," summarized Simpson's professional views on what she referred to as "hidden censorship." She criticized libraries which offer "books promoting diversity of identity, but little to no defense of books promoting diversity of viewpoint, and the purchase of books promoting 'progressive' ideas over 'traditional' ideas." She also cited some beliefs held by the Foundation Against Intolerance and Racism (FAIR), including freedom of speech, objective truth that is discoverable and free from political agendas, and library neutrality.

Despite admitting Simpson was well within her rights to have her own opinion, and even though her column aligned with the library's own collection development policy, the board succumbed to external pressure from a small number of community members with opinions different from Simpson's views. The board also cited Simpson's alignment with the tenets of FAIR as a reason for their decision. These reasons contradict the library's own policies, neglect to consider Ms. Simpson's professional opinion and expertise as a leader in her field, and coincidentally validate the very warnings in her opinion column.

As an organization dedicated to promoting a wide variety of viewpoints on library shelves everywhere and a supporter of freedom of speech for library professionals, ALP strongly disagrees with the rash and unjustified decision of the NOTL Public Library Board to terminate Ms. Simpson as it sets a downstream chilling effect on the professional speech of other CEOs and directors.

We stand with Cathy Simpson, a charter member of ALP, and have submitted an [open letter](#) on her behalf to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board, summarizing our views and calling for her immediate reinstatement as the CEO of the NOTL Public Library.

For more information about ALP, including how to join, please visit [www.alplibraries.org](http://www.alplibraries.org).

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