



2020-2021
EXECUTIVE

March 26, 2021

Via Email - jbraithwaite@weaversimmons.com

Jack Braithwaite
Bencher - Northeast

We are the presidents of the following law associations:

Algoma Law Association
Cochrane Law Association
Nipissing Law Association
Parry Sound Law Association
Sudbury Law Association
Temiskaming Law Association

We are writing to you as you are the LSO Bencher for the Northeast.

The purpose of our letter is to express concern regarding the treatment of Legal Information and Resource Network (LIRN) budget that was voted on during the November 2020 convocation.

LIRN runs the law libraries outside of Toronto and plays a vital role in equitable access to justice throughout the province. It was a surprise to learn of a reduction of 10% across the board was approved.

There is a clear correlation between access to legal resources and the competent provision of legal services to the public. It is for this reason that we are expressing our concerns regarding this budget reduction.

We recognize the need for budget review and trying to do more with less, but the regional law libraries are faced with continuously climbing costs as they try to keep services in place for members.

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Nathan Baker, Vice Chair &
LiRN Chair

Michael Winward, Past
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Region Representative

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The access provided to various legal research data bases, loose-leaf subscription services, and books are vital to those practitioners working at solo or small firms that cannot cover the overhead for these within their organization. Many of these costs continue to rise year after year.

The reduction in funding will impact the services our members receive and in turn the legal services the public receives.

Our concern is that this abundance of resources in one location has resulted in benchers not attributing the proper importance of providing like resources elsewhere. This in essence has the effect of downloading these additional costs to lawyers in the regions should their local associations increase fees to offset these reductions; or, alternatively, a reduction in the services and resources available in these areas.

It is our position that the reduction of the LIRN budget conflicts with the LSO's legislative mandate as set out in s. 4.1 and 4.2 Law Society Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. L.8. It is on this basis that we are asking that the LSO and benchers restore the LIRN budget to the pre-reduction levels.

We thank you for taking the time to review our concerns and look forward to hearing from you regarding the response when this is presented to the other benchers on our behalf.

Yours truly,

Algoma Law Association – Jennifer Tremblay-Hall
Cochrane Law Association – Vaughan Balderston
Nipissing Law Association – Gordon Prisco
Parry Sound Law Association – Joyce Faria
Sudbury Law Association – Jacob Gauthier
Temiskaming Law Association – Laurie Galway