



May 17, 2019 [CAUT News Article](#)

CAUT condemns Heritage report on copyright

(Ottawa – May 17, 2019) The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) is alarmed by recommendations released this week by the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage regarding copyright law in Canada.

The report, though produced by a committee mandated to take into consideration the broad range of stakeholder interests — including creators, the public, educators and students — focuses entirely on the interests of big publishers and their lobby groups.

“The report puts the financial interests of publishers over the rights of students and teachers,” says CAUT executive director David Robinson.

The report makes a number of contentious and alarming recommendations, including rolling back fair dealing rights, extending copyright term, and increasing damages for infringement (even for accidental and minor, non-commercial violation of copyright), while also creating several new rights and payments for publishers.

“Restricting user rights is no way to genuinely support independent Canadian creators, and would have a significant negative impact on scholarly communications and the exchange of knowledge,” Robinson says.

He notes the report demonstrates little understanding of the legal development of fair dealing — the existence and parameters of which have been confirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada — and ignores the reality at Canadian schools, universities, and colleges across Canada.

“Students and schools are paying unsustainable and unfair amounts of money to publishers. Fair dealing is a necessary carve-out that allows appropriate sharing for educational purposes, yet this too is under attack,” Robinson says. “The claim that fair dealing has anything to do with publishers’ declining profits or the struggle that some creators face in making a decent living is demonstrably false. The recommendations should be rejected in favour of a more balanced and fair approach to copyright law.”

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