



CARL Submission to the

House of Commons Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics (ETHI Committee) hearings
on the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA)

April 2017

The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) would like to provide to the Committee the perspective of the library community, with particular focus on the issue known as the 'right to be forgotten' (RTBF).

In this, we are guided by the *Statement on the Right to be Forgotten* issued by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) in February 2016. That statement provides some important international background on the issue:

The purpose of RTBF court rulings and legislation is to allow individuals to make information about themselves that is already on the Internet much more difficult to discover. Under most current applications of RTBF, information is not removed or destroyed at its source; rather, a search engine or web page owner prevents links from appearing in the search results list that is produced following a name search. The originally published information normally remains available and could potentially be located by using a different search engine (or a different national instance of the same search engine) or by using search terms other than the specific name to which an RTBF decision has been applied. That said, in some applications of RTBF, the underlying published information may, in fact, be removed.

Libraries and archives are, by their very mission, preservers of the public record, and defenders of freedom of expression and access to information. They are also sensitive to concerns around personal privacy in the context of the Internet.

CARL's position is that there are important rights and freedoms to be considered, respected and judiciously balanced in any legislative or regulatory approach. These include the integrity of the historical record, privacy, freedom of information and freedom of expression. On our members' behalf, we would welcome the opportunity to provide more detailed recommendations to a future legislative review of the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA).

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