



**Writers Guild of Canada on Bill C-10:
labour-based tax credit has no place judging film and TV content**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ottawa- April 10, 2008 – The Writers Guild of Canada voiced its opposition today to Bill C-10's amendment mandating guidelines by which film and TV productions can be deemed "contrary to public policy" and denied production tax credits. Appearing today before the Senate Standing Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, the WGC made it clear that they found highly objectionable the proposal of non-statutory guidelines judging Canadian film and TV content.

"We cannot accept content guidelines," says Maureen Parker, Executive Director, Writers Guild of Canada. "It is deeply concerning to see the way this labour-based funding mechanism designed to encourage indigenous TV and film production in Canada is being maneuvered into a subjective moral code determining appropriate and inappropriate content."

"Beyond ensuring it does not contravene the criminal code, the tax credit program has no place judging content," says Rebecca Schechter, President, Writers Guild of Canada. "The content is my job as a screenwriter. And my job is evaluated by a producer, a broadcaster or distributor, and an audience free to watch or not. The presence of guidelines will mean second guessing and self-censorship. Nothing provocative, nothing challenging: just family-friendly programming with happy endings. Who's watching that?"

The guidelines will not be law, and can be applied at the discretion of the Minister or the department of Heritage. The WGC is concerned that this will open the process to special interest groups who may have a narrower idea of culture and seek to limit the expression of certain ideas.

Tax credits are an essential part of film and TV financing in Canada. Parker added that "To say that we can just find private money is to deny the reality of the Canadian film and TV industry. Introducing this level of uncertainty around funding may not be censorship in fact but it is definitely censorship in effect. If these guidelines are introduced, they will cast a creative and economic chill over the industry."

For more information, please contact David Kinahan, Director of Communications, Writers Guild of Canada, at 416-979-7907 or 1-800-567-9974, or by email at d.kinahan@wgc.ca