



C-32 Comes Up Empty for Creators

For Immediate Release

Toronto – June 3, 2010. The Writers Guild of Canada fails to see the balance in the “Balanced Copyright” bill introduced by the government yesterday. Tabled in order to redress the long-overdue implementation of the WIPO treaties before the G20 lands in Canada, the bill means we can finally live up to our international obligations around copyright. But the legislation gives too much away at the expense of creators.

The WGC sought a truly balanced approach to copyright that would encourage widespread use and distribution of copyright works while ensuring creators are fairly and appropriately compensated for those uses. The WGC has long recommended a system modelled on the private copying regime that would provide those uses while generating royalties through collective licensing. This bill rightly legalizes many commonplace consumer uses, but it undercuts artists’ ability to be paid for them.

“Bill C-32 misses the mark,” says Maureen Parker, Executive Director, WGC. “Creators want their work to be seen by as many people in as many ways as possible – but they have to be paid for it. The bill legitimizes common consumer uses like time-shifting and format-shifting, but it doesn’t balance that with a return for creators. The solution was simple: expand the private copying regime to include those uses and create a win/win for consumers and creators. This bill should have brought us into the digital age, but it has left Canadian creators empty handed.”

“It’s very generous of the government to give away our work for free,” says Jill Golick, President, WGC. “But we can’t afford free. Copyright is a compact between creators and their audience, and should balance the needs of one with the rights of the other. This bill simply protects the business models of the big U.S. studios but at the expense of Canadian creators”

The WGC will be active during the forthcoming legislative process, working to address some of the gaps in Bill C-32 and trying to bring real balance to copyright in Canada.

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

The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) represents 2,000 professional English-language screenwriters across Canada. These are the talented people who create the distinctly Canadian entertainment we enjoy on our televisions, movie screens, radios and computers.