



WGC says Fair Copyright is Balanced Copyright

For Immediate Release

Toronto – September 11, 2009. The Writers Guild of Canada today filed its submission on copyright reform with the federal government. The WGC welcomes the government's move to update legislation to address the new technologies and media that have changed the way Canadians access copyright material. The WGC's approach to copyright is grounded in one simple principle: copyright law should encourage widespread use and distribution of copyright works while ensuring creators are appropriately compensated for those uses.

"Canada's screenwriters are not interested in toiling away in obscurity," says Rebecca Schechter, President, WGC. "We want our work to reach the widest possible audience. But just like everyone else in the workforce, we have to be paid for our work because, just like everyone else, we have bills to pay."

"Collective licensing is the win/win solution that will balance consumers' desire with creators' due," says Maureen Parker, Executive Director, WGC.

The WGC proposes a solution modelled on the Private Copying regime that generates modest royalties through collective licensing. This will create a balanced approach to copyright by providing greater allowed uses that do not criminalize everyday consumer behaviours, and fairly compensate the creators of the copyright material.

"The world has changed dramatically since the last copyright revision," Parker added, "and Canada needs to step up its game. Right now, the Private Copying levy applies only to sound recordings. In the digital age, copying of copyright work has gone way beyond the mixed tape and CD. But the model's a good one – it's been very effective in compensating music creators for additional uses of their works through a modest levy. So modest, in fact, most people aren't even aware they're paying it."

In Europe and elsewhere, national copyright laws created a system of levies covering additional use of audio-visual content entitling authors to remuneration. In 1999, the WGC founded the Canadian Screenwriters Collection Society (CSCS) to collect these levies on behalf of Canadian screenwriters whose works have been distributed internationally. A similar system will work for Canada, and will allow Canada to properly reciprocate within the international community.

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.