



**WGC is Ready to Work with New TV Policy:
Calls on Broadcasters to Do the Same.**

For Immediate Release – Gatineau – April 8, 2011 – If private broadcasters have their way, Canadian audiences will be seeing even less quality Canadian programming than they do now. The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) today urged the CRTC to uphold the 2010 TV Policy through the Group Licence Renewal process, and ensure that broadcasters provide appropriate support for the production of quality Canadian drama and documentaries.

WGC Executive Director Maureen Parker said that “it feels like we’re back in 1999, having the same discussions with Canadian broadcasters trying to nickel and dime the CRTC to minimize their obligations. And here we are again trying to justify the existence of Canadian drama and documentaries, when this kind of programming is the only reason Canadian broadcasters exist. We can get U.S. shows on U.S. broadcasters. Yet the Canadian private broadcasters are trying to use their track record of underspending on quality Canadian productions to lower the bar for spending in the future. We’re prepared to work with the 2010 TV Policy set out by the CRTC. And they should be too.”

The intent of the 2010 TV Policy was to establish a floor for spending on Canadian programming, and a specific expenditure requirement for the hard-to-finance categories of dramas, longform documentaries and Canadian awards shows (PNI). Based on available data, the Commission concluded that 5% of revenues would be an appropriate level of spending on drama programming. The total number for PNI then must be 5% *plus* whatever the commission determines is the target figure for spending on the other two categories. The broadcasters however have seized on 5% this week as their figure for spending on all PNI.

After reviewing the available data, the WGC determined that the appropriate level for this PNI expenditure is 10% of revenues. This is the level necessary to ensure that popular Canadian shows like *Rookie Blue* and *Flashpoint* don’t disappear from our screens.

In their continuing attempt to reduce their obligations, broadcasters have also suggested that the Canadian production community does not have the capacity to meet an increased demand for programming. The WGC says “Bring it on.”

Appearing with the WGC in Gatineau was showrunner and screenwriter Cal Coons (*Murdoch Mysteries*, *The Listener*), who said, “We’ve been waiting 12 years for a TV Policy that will address the decline of quality Canadian drama. We’re ready to seize this opportunity and we want the broadcasters to see it as their opportunity too. They can create success if they look at this as a chance to distinguish themselves with original quality Canadian programming.”

WGC President Jill Golick added, "After years of public hearings and talking about this, we have a TV Policy that sets a minimum CPE and a floor for drama. Enough talking; let's get working."

For more information, please contact David Kinahan, Writers Guild of Canada, at d.kinahan@wgc.ca

The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) represents more than 2,000 professional English-language screenwriters across Canada. These are the creators who write the distinctly Canadian entertainment we enjoy on our televisions, movie screens and digital platforms