



**How can we watch Canadian TV if we don't know when it's on?
CRTC TV policy cuts promos for Canadian television programs**

For immediate release

Toronto, May 23, 2007 – It's going to be a lot harder to find Canadian television programs thanks to the CRTC's new television policy.

"All the talk has been about the CRTC's decision to stop limiting the numbers of commercials on television – but no one has focused on the two minutes per hour that broadcasters devoted to promoting Canadian programs," said Maureen Parker, Executive Director of the Writers Guild of Canada (WGC).

Prior to the new television policy, broadcasters were only allowed to air 12 minutes of commercials per hour. But since one-hour American programs have 14 minutes or more automatically built in for commercials, Canadian broadcasters that were simulcasting American shows (and earning revenues from inserting Canadian commercials) often used that extra two minutes to promote other Canadian programming. With the removal of advertising limits that will go by the wayside.

"When CTV promotes *Corner Gas* during *American Idol*, it creates excitement about the show, and reminds the one million plus *Idol* viewers when the next episode of *Corner Gas* is on. Now CTV can simply run another commercial to bring in more revenue, instead of promoting a Canadian show," said Parker.

In its new policy, the CRTC acknowledged there has been a huge decline in Canadian television drama with expenditures by conventional English-language broadcasters decreasing from \$62 million or 4% of revenues in 2001, to \$40 million or 2.3% of revenues in 2006. For years the WGC has asked the CRTC to put regulations in place to require broadcasters to spend a minimum of 7% of revenues on original English-language drama.

"But money is only one part of the equation to produce a hit show. It needs to be promoted, and it needs a regular spot on the television schedule," said Parker. "This policy has created a vicious circle. How can Canadian shows get good audience numbers when no one knows when they are on?"

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Writers Guild of Canada

The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) represents more than 1800 professional screenwriters across Canada who create the distinctly Canadian entertainment we enjoy on our televisions, movie screens, radios and computers – such as dramatic TV series and movies, feature films, documentaries, animation programs, comedy and variety series, children's and educational programming, radio drama, corporate videos and digital media productions.

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