



Government Grants no Substitute for Fair and Earned Revenue

For Immediate Release – Toronto – December 16, 2010 – It's been a bad week for Canadian artists. On Tuesday, Conservatives sporting "no iPod Tax" tee-shirts campaigned to strike fear into holiday shoppers, and today the Liberals tabled amendments to Bill C-32 that might be a stopgap for the music industry but does nothing for authors of movies, TV shows and more.

The Liberal proposal correctly recognizes that the Conservative government's copyright Bill C-32 comes at the expense of creators in Canada. But their solution is short-term, not technology neutral and ignores writers. The Liberal party proposes a new fund of \$35 million from general revenue to go to music creators each year. But copyright, insists the WGC, is not about handouts – it is about fair payment for the use of works, *all works*, created.

The WGC is disappointed with the Liberal proposal to amend what is already a potentially damaging copyright Bill for creators. Their proposal does nothing to address the deeply flawed copyright Bill C-32, in particular the Bill's provisions for Reproduction for Private Purposes.

Maureen Parker, Executive Director, WGC, notes that "the real problem is that neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives will recognize that granting consumers free widespread copying of all works will undercut the existing market for original sales. Why buy a DVD when copying is free? By giving away creators' rights to fair compensation for copying, this harms us in perpetuity. If our legislators cannot find a route to fair compensation for all creators, then they must remove the new consumer copying provisions and let the market develop freely."

Jill Golick, President, WGC, noted that "offering a fund for musicians and record companies is not the answer – copyright law has to work for writers too. We want consumers to have access to our work, but we need to be paid – we earned it. Copies have value. There is a price, and most Canadians understand that things of value have a cost associated with them – including their entertainment."

Maureen Parker added that "consumer copying now goes way beyond music on iPods. Bill C-32, and the Liberal proposal, leaves other creators out in the cold. A government grant for copying music is no substitute for a fair and earned revenue stream for all creators. It's not even close."

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.