



WGC Says Bill C-32 Destroys the Markets for Copies

For Immediate Release – Ottawa – February 17, 2011. The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) called on the Canadian government to stand up for creators' rights by fixing the copyright Bill C-32. Appearing before the parliamentary committee today, the WGC stated that Bill C-32 undermines creators' ability to make a living in Canada from their work.

The WGC recommended that the committee delete or fix the Bill's "reproduction for private purposes" clause. The provision allows consumers to make an unspecified number of copies to share with their "friends and family." This section and other provisions in the Bill destroy income streams for creators and give away their work for free.

WGC Executive Director Maureen Parker says "the Bill begs the question: why would your friends and family buy a movie or TV-show boxed set on DVD when you can copy the version you bought and share it with them? This will weaken the market for original sales. Given how easy it now is to make copies of digital files, we need a modern Copyright Act that protects revenue streams rather than undermines them. Creators shouldn't be forced to give away their work for free."

The WGC also requested that the government use the Bill to finally address a long-standing gap in Copyright Law in Canada and define authorship in the audio-visual work as the screenwriter and director. The WGC also argued that Bill C-32 should support collective licensing as a win-win solution for creators and consumers.

WGC President Jill Golick says "collective licensing is a working model that provides consumers with legal access and creators with due compensation. But to get it working for audio-visual creators, we first need to define authorship in the Act. The WGC and the Directors Guild of Canada agree that the screenwriter and director are the co-authors of the audio-visual work. We are the only creators not given the protections of authorship in law. It's time to correct that."

The WGC noted that Bill C-32 erodes existing markets and prevents the development of other markets for copies of creators' works. The quantifiable loss to creators is upwards of \$126M per year, and the potential damage extends well beyond that. The WGC called on the committee to do the right thing with Bill C-32 and protect creators' rights. We can't live on free.

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.