



Writers Guild Asks Senate to Say “No” to Bill C-377

For Immediate Release – May 29, 2013, Toronto – In its appearance today before the Senate Banking, Trade and Commerce Committee, the Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) appealed to senators to reject Bill C-377 and its requirements for public disclosure by unions of all financial transactions over \$5,000.

Maureen Parker, WGC Executive Director, says, “if passed, this legislation will be damaging for screenwriters. Much of what the WGC does is resolve disputes between producers and writers expeditiously, in confidential settlements. This is the reason members and non-members pay dues. Under this Bill, producers will know which writers have been paid in a dispute and may blacklist those writers.”

Parker added that “the requirement to make public all financial transactions over \$5,000 will put the guild and its members at competitive disadvantage. Many of our collective bargaining strategies will become visible as we often hire outside legal counsel to assist us with negotiation preparation. And outside consultants and lawyers may not work with us if their fees become public, or engagers may seek to restrict our access to them by offering higher fees. We will lose all strategic positioning in collective bargaining.”

The WGC also noted that the guild’s Constitution and Bylaws already provide members with transparency, accountability and the ability to shape the direction of their organization through elected representatives. The Bill’s proposed reporting overlays unnecessary, costly, arduous and potentially damaging processes, and it should be withdrawn or defeated.

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The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) represents more than 2,100 professional English-language screenwriters across Canada. These are the creators who write the Canadian entertainment we enjoy on our televisions, movie screens and digital platforms.