

Writers Guild of Canada Congratulates Minister St-Onge on Release of Bill C-11 Policy Direction to the CRTC

For immediate release

November 16, 2023 – Toronto, ON – The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) congratulates Minister of Canadian Heritage Pascale St-Onge upon the release of the new policy direction to the CRTC on implementing *The Online Streaming Act* (Bill C-11).

“This policy direction is a crucial step forward for Canadian screenwriters,” said Alex Levine, WGC president and screenwriter. “It requires the CRTC to ‘support Canadians holding a broad range of key creative positions, in particular those with a high degree of creative control...’ This includes Canadian showrunners and screenwriters who are the authorial voices of Canadian television.”

The WGC has been advocating for online streamers to contribute more to made-in-Canada programming that puts Canadian screenwriters front-and-centre. Specifically, the Guild has been encouraging the inclusion of language that emphasizes maximizing the use of Canadian creative and other human resources in the creation, production and presentation of programming in the Canadian broadcasting system – language which the government has now included via paragraph nine of the policy direction.

Since C-11 passed in April 2023, the Guild has been filing submissions and interventions with the CRTC in defense of Canadian programming, meeting with the Minister of Heritage and key members in government, organizing writer room visits with CRTC Commissioners to learn about Canadian screenwriters, and speaking out on the issue in the media and within the industry. The WGC will continue to work with government and industry stakeholders to ensure that Canadian screenwriters – a crucial part of the \$4 billion domestic Canadian film and television sector – will have a voice and pride of place for years to come.

“The WGC thanks Minister St-Onge, her staff, the Department of Canadian Heritage, and those in the NDP and Bloc Québécois who worked across party lines to advance Canada’s cultural policies through this order,” said WGC Assistant Executive Director Neal McDougall. “It is now time to convert the spirit and intent of the *Online Streaming Act* and this policy direction into ironclad regulatory requirements that support Canadian screenwriters.”

The WGC is scheduled to make an appearance before the CRTC on December 6, where representatives will address key questions on the level and type of contributions that online undertakings must make to the Canadian broadcasting system under C-11.

For more info, contact the WGC’s Manager of Communications, Emily Saso at e.saso@wgc.ca.

ABOUT THE WRITERS GUILD OF CANADA

The Writers Guild of Canada represents 2,500 professional English-language screenwriters across Canada—the creators of Canadian entertainment enjoyed on all screens. wgc.ca @WGCTweet