

January 18th 2006

Dear Canadian Conference of the Arts,

The Green Party of Canada sees cultural and artistic expression as an immeasurable form of capital that makes our society extremely rich in many different aspects. With this in mind, we commit to giving the artistic community as much support as they need to continue flourishing in Canada and abroad. In particular, we support community arts, young artists, and non-profit art that need some start-up help to reach their full potential.

The policies in our platform reflect our point of view and commitment to the arts and culture. For example, we will:

- Increase support for community arts programs and facilities across Canada by establishing stable base-funding at a set percentage of the federal budget.
- Establish stable base-funding for young artists.
- Protect Canada's cultural identity during trade negotiations.
- Expand support for regional arts festivals that bring new Canadian art to a wider audience.
- Share Canadian history by supporting more educational programming.
- Provide stable base-funding for the CBC to provide quality television and radio programming in both official languages.
- Direct the CRTC to reserve more bandwidth for independent and non-profit stations.
- Introduce a law mandating cinemas and video chains to have 20 per cent Canadian content.

In addition, the Green Party of Canada proposes to double the funding of the Canada Council for the Arts, to reach over \$300 million (\$10 per Canadian), and to substantially increase funding for the Cultural Human Resources Council to have stable and sufficient funds on a permanent basis.

At every level, arts and culture help define our identities and communities, they unlock our individual and collective creativity, and help Canadians share their ideas worldwide. To this end, the Green Party of Canada also proposes the Canadian Virtual Cultural Mission. This initiative would consist of sending a special envoy in each cultural "Canada Mission". These Canadian "ambassadors" would be in charge of delivering a document dealing with Canada's economic and cultural values to their foreign homologues. This document would include a CDROM with a link to a web site which will serve as a gateway to members of the cultural, artist, and professional community.

To improve the work conditions of artists we would also support the objectives of CCA's "Fair Tax Treatment of Professional Artists Campaign". Moreover, the

Green Party of Canada is committed to improving the autonomous worker status in order to permit artists and professionals access to full social benefits and to deduct certain costs related to their work. We also believe that Canada needs legislation similar to the fair use laws enjoyed in the United States in order to support innovators' rights. Because such activities as data and file sharing result in losses for artists, it is important that we implement a surcharge on data transfer, which would then be channelled back to the artists themselves. The Green Party of Canada proposes a system of website certification to distinguish between sites that observe copyright laws and pay for access to data and sites that do not. A surcharge on bandwidth transfer would then be implemented for uncertified sites that are transferring significant quantities of copyrighted data.

We find it extremely important to protect Canadian broadcasting and communication systems, by providing stable funding, regulating for Canadian content, and adapting to be able to meet cultural objectives in more challenging mediums such as the Internet, satellite radio, and others. We also commit to maintaining at least 53% of Canadian ownership in our media in order to protect our culture. Further, we find it important to have diversity in cultural expression and would implement measures to avoid concentration of ownership and support more community oriented and produced initiatives.

We look forward to a vibrant cultural and artistic community in Canada,

Sincerely,

Jim Harris  
Leader of the Green Party of Canada