



Ottawa, Canada K1A 0M5

Ms. Jennifer Dorner
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MAY 22 2008

Dear Ms. Dorner:

I am replying to your correspondence addressed to the Honourable Josée Verner, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages, regarding a federal government cultural policy with respect to federal funding to arts and culture in Canada.

Ms. Verner appreciates your advising her of your views and has noted your comments with respect to this matter. Please be assured that the Government of Canada recognizes the important role that the arts and culture play in the lives of Canadians and to the development of communities across the country. The federal government provides more than \$3.4 billion annually to the Canadian arts and cultural sector through funding programs and a number of tax incentives. The Government has demonstrated a commitment to the arts by recently announcing several funding initiatives for the arts. For your reference, some of these initiatives are outlined in the enclosure.

Canada does not have one overall cultural policy; it has a wide range of vigorous policy and program instruments that support Canadian culture. The Government consults with stakeholders regularly with regard to its policies related to culture to ensure the relevance of these instruments.

I trust that this information is useful. Please accept my best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Craig Carson
Senior Policy Advisor

Enclosure

Canada

ANNEX

Recent funding initiatives of the federal government for the Canadian arts and cultural sector

In the 2006 federal budget, the Government announced additional funding of \$50 million over two years to the Canada Council for the Arts—\$20 million in fiscal year 2006-2007 and \$30 million in fiscal year 2007-2008.

In recognition of the Canada Council's 50th anniversary in 2007, this \$30 million commitment was made permanent. The Canada Council has used the new funding to strengthen the most successful Canadian arts organizations, offer greater assistance to artists in all disciplines, and increase support for activities that give Canadians access to the arts (such as presentation and touring). Taking this increase into account, the Government of Canada will now provide yearly funding of \$181 million to the Canada Council for the Arts—a 20 percent increase over the last two years.

Also announced in the 2006 federal budget was the elimination of capital gains taxes on donations of publicly listed securities to charities. This measure was expanded in the 2007 federal budget to include donations of publicly listed securities to private foundations. This fundamental change in federal tax law will provide further incentive for communities to support the arts in Canada. It is estimated that \$20 million was donated to the arts in the ten months following the 2006 federal budget.

Finally, in 2007, the Government of Canada announced \$30 million in new funding per year to support local arts and heritage festivals and events, and to engage Canadians in their communities through the expression, celebration and preservation of local culture.