

Date

Dear {MP, MPP, Councillor, etc.}

My name is _____ and I am a playwright currently living in the Waterloo region. I firmly believe that in order for myself and other artists to thrive, we need sustainable, stable, public funding.

As a playwright, I have seen the consequences when funding is cut—most theatres no longer take unsolicited submissions, play development centres lag behind in their creative work as they chase after dollars, and artists do not have the salaries they need and deserve to complete their work. This system puts limits on the creative work, and bars us from moving forward.

The viability of a city depends on its cultural opportunities, and I see my city is suffering. *Much of the funding around my region goes to the bigger and better known centres such as Toronto, Stratford, Niagara-on-the-Lake, and even then there is not enough to go around.* To produce new work we need to support new artists, and to support these artists our theatres and development centres need more resources.

In order to become successful, playwrights have to commit to developing their craft. Often when their work gets noticed playwrights begin to secure readings, workshops, committed development from a theatre or a place in a writer's unit. More often than not, there is little-to-no compensation for these activities due to lack of resources. Playwrights commit substantial time (and often money for travel and supply costs) to this development—all with no compensation for their work. They do it because they are committed and passionate about their craft. To commit the appropriate amount of time to invest in proper development, playwrights have to cut back or completely quit their day jobs. *What other profession defines success by doing so well you have to give up your source of income?* Something has to change.

I ask that you support:

1. *A specific piece of legislation pertaining to increased funding in the arts.*
2. *That the government consider increasing arts funding in its next fiscal year {specificity about the budget and allocation to federal, provincial or municipal arts councils can be inserted according to the year the letter is written}*

Our artistic legacy is part of what defines us. The arts celebrate our humanity, broaden our horizons, and teach us to think emotionally not just intellectually. They ask important questions and bring us together as a community. But it has to start at the grassroots level—the money needs to go to the artists and the people helping to create the art. We need to stop funding projects and start funding artists.

Though we continue to face challenges in today's atmosphere of economic uncertainty, an increase in the arts and culture sector will lead to nothing but benefits for our community; it will lead to greater productivity in the sector, higher quality in the art, and it will better the artistic offerings and the opportunities to extend into the larger markets. The arts are worth the investment. I thank you for taking the time to review this letter.

Sincerely,

Name

Address

Phone #

E-mail