

Dear Mr Wall and Mr. Krawetz,

I am writing in response to the provincial budget with particular regard to the government's decision to end the Saskatchewan Film Employment Tax Credit program.

I am a Professor at the University of Regina where I am Head of the Department of Visual Arts and an Associate member of the Department of Film. I am also part of a group of Professors currently developing new initiative in the area of 'creative technologies' that we hope will become a major new degree offering from the Faculty of Fine Arts. Moving images and storytelling are at the root of what I do and MANY of my former students in Visual Arts, Music, Theatre and Film have gone on to careers with film, television and media art. This is what we are trying hard to GROW in Saskatchewan - new initiatives, creative people, good ideas. The SFETC is a critical piece in the financing of Saskatchewan productions, productions that employ set-designers, costume and prop makers, story-board artists, digital media and graphic designers, sound designers and actors in addition to all of the technical and creative jobs involved in the creation of moving images.

I listened to Virginia Thompson on the CBC radio yesterday (Producer of Corner Gas and Insecurity) who eloquently explained how the tax credit system works and most poignantly, the economics of it - that the government investment produces a huge return. This is a program that WORKS. Since inception the SFETC has spent 100 million dollars in tax credits, which has resulted in a return to the Saskatchewan economy of 623 million dollars. In 2008/09, Saskatchewan film and television production stimulated nearly \$75 million of economic activity and created over 1,200 jobs in the province. These jobs help keep young creative people in Saskatchewan. Young creative people don't just move into other jobs when the creative opportunities dry up - THEY LEAVE FOR ANOTHER PROVINCE.

Ending the SFETC program will, in effect, kill any present and future opportunities for film productions to occur in the province and will force professionals committed to working in the industry and their families to relocate.

As a Saskatchewan taxpayer and as someone deeply committed to training students and building a rich cultural landscape in this Province, I am seriously concerned with this budget and urge you to reconsider this cut, keeping in mind the impact this has on industry, the local economy, and Saskatchewan families. Please don't be the Government that turns Saskatchewan into a cultural wasteland: very little grows in a cultural desert.

Respectfully,

Rachelle Viader Knowles
Head and Graduate Coordinator
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Canada