

SMPIA calls for cabinet minister to be removed

The Saskatchewan Media Production Industry Association today called upon Premier Brad Wall to remove Bill Hutchinson as the Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport and replace him with someone who has a better understanding of the film, TV and digital industry.

“The actions of this Minister have brought a \$50 million annual industry to the brink of disaster. He has consistently ignored our concerns and brought forward a program that will not work. We respectfully ask the Premier of Saskatchewan to remove this Minister and replace him with an individual that understands the issues and will help us develop a program that will work for the industry,” said Ron Goetz.

During the recent provincial budget, the Government of Saskatchewan announced the elimination of funding to the Saskatchewan Film Employment Tax Credit, which has supported the growth and development of the film and digital media industry in the province. Since that announcement the industry has been working to develop a new incentive program that will enable the industry to remain competitive.

The industry presented a draft plan to the Minister with the intention of working with the government to develop a new incentive program. The following day the Minister announced a program that was not endorsed by the industry and has a significant flaw that makes it unworkable. The program contains a non-refundable tax credit and the industry requires a refundable tax credit.

“This program will simply not work and the manner in which it was released makes it very difficult for our industry to work with the current Minister. It would best serve the people of Saskatchewan if a new Minister with a better understanding of our industry were named to help us create a program that will keep our industry in Saskatchewan,” said Goetz.

He added there is still time for the government to develop a program that will keep the industry alive in Saskatchewan, but the longer this process takes, the more difficult it becomes for the industry to attract outside investment.

For more information contact Ron Goetz at (306) 525-6361.