



May 20, 2018

Stuart Johnston
President
Canadian Independent Music Association

Dear Mr. Johnston,

Thank you for reaching out on behalf of Canadian Independent Music Association's (CIMA) Ontario-based membership and MusicOntario. We also thank you for the important work your organization is doing in advocating to remove barriers for music artists and small businesses, to create jobs, and to support Canadian success stories at home and abroad.

New Democrats are proud to support and promote Canadian artists with Canadian bands playing an integral role in our 2018 *Change for the Better* provincial election campaign. In fact, Tom Wilson performed at our campaign launch. Hamilton – Andrea Horwath's hometown – has long been an incubator of independent music and a thriving live music scene. As MPP for Hamilton Centre, she has been a proud supporter of the many amazing developments in the arts and culture communities, including the annual Supercrawl festival. An NDP government will continue to champion Ontario's live music sector, which drives local economies and creates local jobs.

New Democrats are also proud to have musicians and other culture creators as candidates during this campaign, including Dwayne Morgan and Sean Conway.

New Democrats are committed to ensuring that funding for the arts does not fall further behind. That's why we will stabilize annual funding for the Ontario Media Development Corporation, including the Ontario Music Fund, to ensure that it can meet the needs of both new and established artists as well as support Ontario's talented independent music community. We will also continue to champion Ontario industries and Ontario workers as trade deals are renegotiated, and we will fight for fairness and reciprocity with our biggest trade partners.

In addition to our commitment to stabilize funding for the Ontario Media Development Corporation, we will support Ontario's creative industries and culture workers through other initiatives such as our \$10 million investment in museum and gallery passes for local library users. We will also provide \$550 million towards the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund, allowing local governments to make long-term plans – including in local culture and heritage attractions. Further, an NDP government is committed to

consulting with partners in Ontario's music industry to determine effective policies and programmes that will allow the creation and retention of intellectual property within this industry.

Andrea Horwath and the NDP believe a career in the arts should not mean a struggle to get by, and that's why our *Change for the Better* platform plan supports creative industries workers, including musicians and producers, who often work as independent contractors. Through our innovative Ontario Benefits program and universal pharmacare program, we will help ensure that people working in the arts have greater access to prescription drugs and dental care. New Democrats recognize that a new model for health benefits is required in today's changing economy — a model where health benefits follow the person, not the job.

Additionally, New Democrats will foster greater access to educational and employment opportunities for equity-seeking groups through initiatives such as our 27,000 new work-integrated-learning opportunities that allow students to graduate with real-world experience. Further, we will build on the federal Student Work Integrated Learning Program, expanding it beyond science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to include other fields – such as the arts – to create the music producers of the future. We are committed to working with the commercial music industry to further develop opportunities for equity-seeking groups.

It is also important to note that pursuing a post-secondary education in the arts will no longer feel out-of-reach. Under an NDP government, every student who qualifies for Ontario Student Assistance Plan (OSAP) will get a non-repayable grant instead of a loan. This means every student whose family is eligible for the OSAP will graduate free of any debt to the province. Further, we will retroactively forgive all interest for everyone carrying provincial student loan debts.

Once again, we thank you for reaching out on issues that are important to CIMA and its members. A New Democrat government is excited to work in partnership with CIMA and others to ensure that Ontario's arts and culture sector thrives. We look forward to getting to work.

Best,

Ontario's New Democrats

