

CMPA statement on joint open letter by Bell Media, Corus Entertainment and Rogers Media

OTTAWA, August 3, 2017—In a [rebuttal letter](#) published in yesterday's *Hill Times*, Canada's English-language private broadcasters (Bell Media, Corus Entertainment and Rogers Media) contested the facts of a [joint open letter](#) published a week earlier on July 24th by a coalition of 19 groups representing Canada's screen-based media industry.

This July 24th coalition letter, co-signed by the Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA), called on the Minister of Canadian Heritage Mélanie Joly and the federal Cabinet to overturn the CRTC decisions that greatly reduced the amount that these broadcasters must spend on the commissioning of Canadian dramas, comedies, documentaries and award shows, known together as Programs of National Interest (PNI).

Today, the CMPA's president and CEO Reynolds Mastin issued the following statement in response to the broadcaster letter published yesterday:

The broadcasters dismiss CRTC regulations that have helped build a thriving domestic industry as “protectionist measures” of the past. But the truth is that the broadcasters’ near-complete dominance over Canada’s television market comes from them having enjoyed decades of regulatory protection. Their business model also continues to depend on government rules that benefit them. And now, notwithstanding having been allowed by the CRTC to achieve unprecedented levels of consolidation, they are seeking to reduce their contributions to our domestic industry to the lowest common denominator. This is the very definition of having your cake and eating it too.

The broadcasters also claim that the CRTC decisions enable them to focus on the promotion, marketing and export of Canadian content. This claim is belied by what they tell advertisers, and by the broadcasters’ marketing strategies and schedules, where the overwhelming focus is squarely on foreign content.

And yet, they say to Minister Joly and the federal cabinet: “trust us.” Unfortunately, history has taught us that vague, unenforceable commitments are no substitute for mandated contributions – contributions that have helped build an industry that is a magnet for young creative talent and is a national jobs machine.

We are seeking to overturn the CRTC decisions in order to keep both our youth and our talent in Canada – rather than them becoming our industry’s biggest export.

– Reynolds Mastin, President and CEO, CMPA

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ABOUT THE CMPA

The Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA) is the country's leading member-based advocacy organization for independent producers, representing hundreds of companies engaged in the development and distribution of English-language content made for television, cinema and digital media channels. The CMPA works to promote the continued success of the Canadian production sector and ensure a future for diverse content made by Canadians for both domestic and international audiences. cmpa.ca

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