

Dear Minister Lohnes-Croft and

I am writing to you today because I care about live theatre. As your constituent, I want you to know I value the benefits live theatre bring to my community. I know the cultural industry was promised long-term sustaining support four months ago and a recent announcement indicated a plan would be announced soon. I want our live theatres to be here in the future and so **I am asking you to provide meaningful long-term support now** to ensure their continued success.

Like so many organizations and businesses in Nova Scotia, theatre producers shut down on March 13th. However, while many parts of our economy have been permitted to cautiously reopen, **the performing arts industry for the most part remains dark – they were among the first to close and will be the last to re-open.**

While I recognize theatres are permitted to re-open here in Nova Scotia, the reality of the situation is they cannot afford to do so under current public health regulations. Ticket revenue from severely reduced-capacity audiences cannot economically sustain the expenses incurred while creating a theatre production. Rent, utilities, royalties, production expenses, cast expenses, and more **do not change** whether you have one person in an audience or one thousand. Further, venues will **now have increased costs of production** because of increased cleaning, installation of protective barriers and signage, and PPE provisions for employees, volunteers, and patrons.

Theatres bring inarguable value to their communities and contribute to the vibrant cultural identity of Nova Scotia. Theatres make it possible to share stories, give voice to the marginalized, and unite communities – actions we desperately need to promote and protect, as events of 2020 have plainly shown us.

When the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown Nova Scotia, the provincial government promised significant financial support to theatre and cultural organizations to help them weather the storm and secure their futures. **I ask you now to please extend that promised financial support to these vital organizations.**

Sincerely,