

Dear Premier Campbell, and Ministers Krueger and Coleman,

I am writing to strongly protest your cuts to arts funding in British Columbia. These cuts are not only directly damaging to arts and culture in BC, they are poor economic policy and are bad for BC's communities.

According to the government's own reports, for every dollar spent on the arts through the BC Arts Council, between \$1.05 and \$1.36 comes back to the BC treasury. However, in the midst of a recession, you are cutting an already low level of support by 81%, and taking away \$77 million of gaming revenues that until this year were used to support charities, including charitable arts organizations. This is bad, reckless, and poorly-considered public policy; worse, it is a betrayal of assurances that were made before the election.

Many of the people of BC are offended by Rich Coleman's cynical argument that giving money to artists takes food out of the mouths of hungry children. The government has consistently made clear that it cares for neither artists nor children, and probably even less for the children of artists. BC gives less money to the arts than almost any Canadian province; BC's inaction on child poverty is disgraceful, and to attempt to shift the blame for the government's own failings in this area on to artists and cultural workers is nonsensical.

I am asking that you reinstate all cancelled Gaming Branch Direct Access grants. Concerning the BC Arts Council, I ask that your government take steps to increase its funding; or at the very least, commit to maintain the budget of the BC Arts Council at its 2008/2009 level of \$47.8 million.

Sincerely,

[name] [city]