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Wednesday, March 18, 2020

The Honourable Bernard Davis, Minister for Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation,  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
CC: Reg Winsor, Executive Director, ArtsNL  
Stan Hill, Chair of the Board, ArtsNL

Dear Minister,

We are writing today to ask for your help protecting the arts community from the devastating financial effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Social distancing measures are critical right now, but proactive decisions need to be made to ensure that artists and arts organizations can continue to live and work. When the all clear is given later in 2020, artists will provide the concerts and shows that will bring us all together again and help work through our collective experience of this unprecedented time. Without the following measures, we are gravely concerned for the survival of many arts organizations that underpin the cultural fabric of our province:

- Financial supports and extended deadlines for arts organizations, specifically those who have invested money in productions halted by the pandemic.
- Many organizations are working to honour contracts and pay artists for work that ultimately may not be performed, in order to protect the livelihood of those individuals. Please ensure that these organizations aren't penalized for taking on those costs that won't be balanced by any revenues when they submit activity or grant reports for this timeframe.
- In the spring of 2019, your Government committed to increasing funding to ArtsNL over the next three years. Thank you for the first increase, which allowed ArtsNL to expand the number and size of grants awarded this year. This money was a downpayment on the creation of much of the artistic work that will be

produced in Newfoundland and Labrador in the next two years and will allow our artists to leverage federal and private funding, and to create products that are fundamental to our tourism industry. Please continue to nurture these critical seeds of creation by protecting and increasing funding to ArtsNL.

Because many workers in the arts community provide services for several organizations, they are critical to the success of many different events, festivals and communities, but are not eligible for employment insurance. The only way to protect these individuals is to find ways to keep our arts organizations alive through this very difficult time, and help our creative community feel safe so that they can plan with confidence the cultural events that will be a balm for us all when this pandemic is finally over.

Thank you in advance for your consideration, and for your hard work during this unimaginable time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Noreen Golfman". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large initial "N" and "G".

Mark Dobbin and Noreen Golfman, Co-Chairs, on behalf of the Board of Directors of Business and Arts NL

Margaret Allen, MA Consulting  
Rob Blackie, Take the Shot Productions  
David Bradley, Garrick Theatre  
Kevin Casey, Cal Legrow Insurance  
Alex Collins, Equinor  
Eleanor Dawson, member at large  
Ron Ellsworth, Remax  
David Hood, Grant Thornton

Amy House, Tyndrum Media and  
Communications  
David Maggs, Gros Morne Summer Music  
John O'Dea, QC, McInnes Cooper  
Mark Ploughman, Mark Ploughman Consulting  
Theresa Rahal, Strategic Directions  
Melissa Saunders, Cox and Palmer  
Ian Sutherland, Memorial University