

**From:** Jackie Torrens [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 05, 2015 10:53 AM  
**To:** Office of the Legislative Counsel  
**Cc:** mmacdonald@navnet.net; Premier, Finance Minister; justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca; megan.leslie@parl.gc.ca  
**Subject:** Bill 108, the Financial Measures Act #nsfilmjobs  
**Attachments:** 557946\_10152336170693572\_182705565\_n(1).jpg

My name is Jackie Torrens and I've worked as an actor/writer/director and documentary-maker in Halifax, Nova Scotia for 18 years. I own a house in Halifax with my partner Tony Owen, who is a highly-skilled scenic painter for TV and film. We, of course, both pay taxes.

Tony has made his living for two decades working on the bigger budget productions that come to town, like Haven (filmed in Chester NS) and Moby Dick (filmed in Shelburne) - just to name a few. However, my whole career has been in the indie scene, which I very much fear won't survive with the current negotiations as they stand right now. Just this March, I represented the Nova Scotia film industry at the Canadian Screen Awards - I was nominated for my acting work in Thom Fitzgerald's NS-shot mini series Sex and Violence (starring Oscar winner Olympia Dukakis). The show features an ensemble of east coast talent both in front and behind the scenes - and it's a show that is not only shot here but is ABOUT here. The east coast in fact had a record number of nominations this year at the CSA's - our TV shows and films were all over the place at this event. I was also recently nominated by Actra Maritimes for my work in Andrea Dorfman's NS-shot feature film Heartbeat, which - if you've never seen it - is a visual love letter to this place and the people who live here.

I seriously am worried that we will lose our east coast indigenous storytellers, who depend on the indie scene for their livelihood - and whose work helps develop and showcase our culture. That's what an indie scene is supposed to do - turn a buck, sure - but also shape and inform the culture of a place. Indie work uncovers and brings our stories to the fore. For instance, I also have a little production company called Peep Media with NS producer Jessica Brown. In 2014, we made a documentary called Edge of East (just nominated for a Screen Nova Scotia award for Best Doc). It uncovered a forgotten subculture of Nova Scotia yodelers, amazing amateur musicians following in the footsteps of our own Wilf Carter, aka The Father of Canadian Country Music. In the picture I have attached to this email, I am standing with 92 year old yodeler Paul Belanger and Cumberland County's Vonetta Chouinard, a cousin of Wilf Carter. Our story broadcast to the province and the country and, since then, we've received calls from up and coming musicians who want to carry on this distinct Nova Scotia tradition.

Jess and I did that doc last year. Will a story like that be able to be told this time next year? This industry only works when it is able to compete in, and with, the global market. Without the tax credit, what have we built over the past 20 years? For what purpose all that work, all that talent, all that time? What will happen to our stories?

I urge you to restore the NS film tax credit to where it was before April 9th of this year - until the end of 2015. From now until then, please consider getting an independent party to investigate the economics of the NS film industry (including spin-off monies) - as well, continue your crash course in learning about this vital and growing industry by continuing to consult with us - something that should have been done BEFORE April 9th.

Thank you for your time in reading this letter,

Jackie Torrens

Halifax writer/actor/director/documentary-maker  
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