

March 24th: NCRA/ANREC Advocated for Community Radio to Government



ADVOCACY TO GOVERNMENT ON COVID19



Hello NCRA/ANREC Members

We wanted to keep you all up to date with the steps being taken by the NCRA/ANREC and our partners at ARC du Canada and ARC du Québec in regards to advocating for our sector.

Last Friday we had a meeting with a senior policy advisor to the Minister of Heritage Steven Guilbeault PC. MP. We emphasized to the Minister the essential role that community and campus radio is playing during this crisis. There are more than 180 radio stations across the country supported by more than 10,000 volunteers, broadcasting local news, emergency alerts and much more. We sent [a detailed update on Monday](#).

You can see the translation of what we provided the [Minister here](#): In addition, we've captured some of the highlights of the responses provided to us by our members in this [two-pager here](#).

All three associations last week took time to reach out to their members to better understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As our members know we are predicting losses in advertising, fundraising, and event revenues.

We told the Minister *"There is a big problem with income predictability. The impacts are difficult to quantify at the moment, but we are talking about potential revenue losses which could represent more than 50% at the end of the year. This represents a shortfall of between \$ 10 million and \$ 15 million."*

We have heard from campus and community stations about a flight of volunteer capacity, with programmers in many stations unable to produce their programming from home. Additionally, volunteer capacity in other roles at the stations have been desperately curtailed. Based on feedback from our members we believe that there will be a significant impact on staffing capacity across our sector. This will likely snowball as each staff member supports on average at least 33 volunteers.

Here is what we told the Minister regarding human resources challenges: *“Given that the sector employs around 800 paid workers, it can be estimated that between 200 and 400 people will see their employment situation at least weakened or even disappear - between 25 and 50% of jobs are threatened in the short term, perhaps more long-term.”*

The NCRA/ANREC and the ARCs have proposed several potential solutions to the Minister of Heritage, including quick advertising buys on our membership network to help inject funds into the sector while getting important information out to the membership. The intention behind these suggestions is to free up funds as quickly as possible:

“Increase its advertising purchases in the local media: it is the responsibility of the government to join the as many citizens as possible, in the largest territory possible. However, community radio stations reach audiences and niche markets that cannot be reached by other radio stations.

- *Recognize the local news media as an essential service to ensure the free movement of journalists in the event of compulsory confinement, provide access to special day-care centers for managers and employees of information services, etc.*
- *Put in place support measures to keep resources in place*
- *Offer tax credits to businesses that buy in local media”*

The NCRA/ANREC is continuing to correspond with Heritage to see what we can do, in addition to working with other potential funding partners. Unfortunately, we do not have a timeline on any information but we have expressed the urgency in our report for additional support to our stations.

If you received national advertising buy information, please share that with us so we know if, what and how much is coming through to the members.

We thank you all for your patience and perseverance during this time.

Yours,

Barry Rooke,

NCRA/ANREC Executive Director