



**The voice of live
music in Canada**
La voix du spectacle
musical au Canada

September 25, 2022

The Honourable Melanie Mark
Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport
Room 133 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Mark,

I am reaching out today, on behalf of British Columbia's incredible live music industry (and the ecosystem it supports, including artists and tourists), to say thank you for all of your efforts on our behalf during the last 2.5 years. The resources your government delivered directly to our members in times of great need were incredibly appreciated.

Unfortunately, our road to full recovery is much longer than anyone could have anticipated. As recipients of the Fairs, Festivals and Recovery grant close the books on their first season in several years, I wanted to echo what you may be hearing from others – that while the industry is open, recovery is far from complete. We are thrilled to be operating again but continue to face extraordinary challenges – access to skilled labour, unsteady ticket sales, radically decreased sponsorships as well as entirely different buying habits and patterns (e.g. people are waiting until the last minute to purchase, they are buying single day tickets instead of full passes, we are seeing a 20% no-show rate from ticket holders leading to decreased sales of f+b, merchandise, etc.) to name a few. Revenues are simply not returning in a predictable, consistent or stable way for many in the sector. Taken together with consumer confidence waning as the fall approaches, the uncertainty continues to pose significant hurdles for event producers of all shapes and sizes.

It's with this in mind that we are asking your government to renew the Fairs, Festivals and Recovery grant program at previous levels, to bring at least some assurance to these businesses and organizations who are vital to the tourism economy, and who create jobs as well as a myriad of direct and indirect economic, social and cultural impacts for the people of (and visitors to) beautiful British Columbia.

A renewed program would help the sector build momentum into 2023, and give confidence to artists, fans and sponsors alike that a robust, thriving cultural scene is a must-have for the Province of BC.

Once again, thank you for your hard work on behalf of all of your stakeholders. There can be no question that many businesses and organizations would simply not be here today without your help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erin Benjamin".

Ms. Erin Benjamin
President & CEO
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