

Thank you for taking the time to write the Green Party of Canada and inquire about our policies.

You asked about Green Party policies concerning arts and culture. The Green Party believes that arts and culture help define our identities and communities. The Green Party also recognizes that today over 600,000 Canadians are employed in the cultural sector, and wishes to promote their success by investing in our future musicians, dancers, painters, writers, and other artists. We believe this is necessary because artists are often placed in a precarious financial situation, and they will benefit from innovative financial tools and increased funding.

The Green Party will therefore work towards increasing community arts programs and facilities across Canada by establishing stable base-funding at a set percentage of the federal budget. Additionally, we will establish stable base-funding for young artists, expand support for regional arts festivals that bring new Canadian art to a wider audience and share Canadian history by supporting more educational programming.

The Green Party would attempt to increase the share of Canadian content by supporting CBC television and radio programming in both official languages. The Green party would introduce a law mandating cinemas and video chains to have 20 per cent Canadian content and direct the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) to reserve bandwidth for independent and non-profit stations.

A Green government would also protect Canadian cultural identity during international trade negotiations and promote the artistic vision of Canadians worldwide. We are also committed to protecting the sovereignty of Canadian telecommunications companies in order to ensure that foreign interests cannot seize control of our media.

If you require any further information on the Green Party's arts and culture policy, please feel free to contact Olivier Adam, our Arts and Culture advocate, at partivert@cyberfilms.ca.

For general background information and the 2006 Green Party of Canada platform, please visit www.greenparty.ca. You can access media releases through the Newsroom, located on the left side of the Home page. The Media Releases section is the first item in the drop-down menu.

The policies of the Green Party of Canada are socially progressive, fiscally responsible and environmentally sustainable. They are founded upon six fundamental principles: ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, non-violence, sustainability, and respect for diversity.

Please note that I have attached a press release relevant to this topic below.

Thank you once again for taking the time to write us.

Sincerely,
Election Info Centre Assistant

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Press release:

Liberals drop culture ball yet again

"Canadian artists look to the federal government for support and are hardly comforted by corporate assurances from US retailers", said Harris. "Yet again, our artists have been let down by their government".

(Montreal, 12 September 2005) - The Liberal government's decision last week to uphold a Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) ruling granting licenses to two satellite radio networks is the latest erosion of Canada's cultural identity in the face of American pressure, said Green Party of Canada leader Jim Harris today.

"Despite widespread opposition to the CRTC decision, the government has chosen instead to side with US interests including companies like mega retailer Best Buy, rather than protecting Canada's cultural industry and our artists", said Harris.

Harris was referring to recent full page newspaper ads taken out by Best Buy and its sister company Future Shop calling on the federal cabinet to uphold the CRTC decision. The ads ran in papers across the country. The ads which could best be described as a thinly veiled lobbying campaign, called on the federal government to "allow the CRTC decision to stand". They were signed on behalf of the company's "10,000 associates in Canada".

"Regrettably, these ads were self-serving in the extreme as Best Buy had already signed an agreement in August to distribute XM Satellite Radio through all its Best Buy and Future Shop retail electronics stores across Canada", said Harris. The Green Party leader noted that the ads did not draw specific attention to the company's commercial sales agreement.

"Canadian artists look to the federal government for support and are hardly comforted by corporate assurances from US retailers", said Harris. "Yet again, our artists have been let down by their government".

Canadian Satellite Radio Inc. (CSR) and Sirius Canada Inc. were awarded licenses to operate up to 100 commercial-free music channels, with the only restriction that eight channels be produced in Canada and only 25 per cent of that content in French.