

May 8, 2017

The Honorable Navdeep Bains
Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
Navdeep.Bains@parl.gc.ca

Dear Mr. Bains,

I am the Executive Director of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT). PACT represents 147 theatre companies across Canada, many of which use the wireless spectrum for audio and video both for performers onstage and crew backstage as well as Hearing Assistance and Audio Description systems. We are concerned about the decreasing spectrum availability and what that means to us artistically, in the choice of what is enhanced onstage, and financially, in the purchase of more specialized technical equipment. Furthermore, in some geographical areas, we've not seen new services using the newly restricted spectrum so this spectrum decrease feels arbitrary and not necessarily supported by a credible industry demand in our country.

The American Federal Communication Commission (FCC) continues to auction off the spectrum between 600Mhz-700Mhz. A similar auction took place a few years ago with the 700Mhz-800Mhz spectrum with Canada following suit shortly after which resulted in a costly equipment replacement/upgrade for at least one of our members. Industry Canada has stated that it will harmonize with the results of the FCC auction in terms of what spectrum is used for what, and will likely have a similar auction after the FCC's is completed.

What this means for theatre and other live performing arts is that some or all of that spectrum may now be used by other industries such as television or ISPs, leaving only 467Mhz-600Mhz available to us. Many theatres own wireless gear that operates on that spectrum. The affected gear will still function, but may receive or cause interference with other users of the spectrum. Also, if a theatre causes interference to a licensed broadcaster, there could be significant repercussions.

On behalf of PACT theatre companies, most of which are non-profit charitable organizations who would be financially affected by the loss of spectrum, I respectfully request that you take our concerns into consideration when next allowing spectrum to be auctioned.

Respectfully,



Sara Meurling, Executive Director

cc Minister Melanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage
Bonnie Green, Chair of Advocacy Committee, Professional Association of Canadian Theatres