Dear Minister Bethlenfalvy:

I appreciate the valuable work you are doing to steward our province through this difficult financial period. I am writing you today in regards to your ongoing preparations for Budget 2023.

I have recently met with XXX, a keystone institution in the cultural fabric of RIDING and a top tourist destination. They informed me of the economic challenges still facing their organization and indeed Ontario’s tourism industry at-large.

These include some traditional audience goers that, according to our government’s statistics, are still afraid to return to large scale in-person activities, and a changing financial model that is forcing them to adapt on the fly. XXX informs me that they are up to face the challenge, but are looking to our government as a partner to help facilitate this transition.

It is my understanding that any further substantial disruptions to their established funding model could put at serious risk their ability to operate and serve my community of RIDING in the years to come.

Statistics Canada reports that the cultural economy in Ontario generated a provincial GDP impact of $28.7 billion in 2019. Of this, the sectors where OAC is a primary support contributed over $5.4 billion of provincial GDP — greater than the impact of Film & Television ($2.0 billion) or Interactive Digital Media ($4.3 billion).

XXX are not asking for increased funding from the Government of Ontario, they are aware of the difficult financial circumstances facing the province and the multitude of high level priorities our government is engaging on including expanding healthcare capacity, improving transit and transportation options, and getting more home built.

XXX has requested that we maintain the funding of the Ontario Arts Council, where they receive some level of funding, at its current level. This seems like a reasonable proposition as they adapt to a new financial reality and has my full support.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Your sincerely,

YYYY ZZZ, MPP
RIDING

Cc. Premier Doug Ford

Hon. Neil Lumsden, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport