

February 26, 2014

John Traversy
Secretary General
CRTC
Ottawa, ON K1A 0N2
Fax: 819-994-0218

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

Re: Broadcasting Notice of Application 2014-26 regarding the renewal of the broadcasting licences for English-language conventional and multilingual ethnic television stations and for certain specialty television services

We write to you as Members of Parliament for Davenport and for Vancouver Kingsway and as the Official Opposition's Critic and Deputy Critic for Multiculturalism, respectively.

We wish to limit our intervention to multilingual ethnic television stations and we wish to express our support for Rogers' application for the renewal of those services.

However, we would like to express to the Commission our serious concerns over some significant changes to the licence conditions Rogers is proposing in its application that could lead to reductions in multilingual ethnic programming.

Last year, we wrote to the Commission to express our concerns over previous cuts to OMNI programming and their impact on many Canadian ethnic communities. We note that while the Commission concluded that Rogers continued to respect its licence conditions, it also "*expressed concern over the potential impact of the changes on the communities served by the stations and the apparent lack of local programming on some of the OMNI television stations.*"

As a result, the Commission required an early review of Roger's licence conditions for OMNI stations. We thank the Commission for taking this matter seriously.

We are concerned the licence conditions Rogers is requesting in this proceeding will impact various communities in Toronto, London, Ottawa, Calgary, Edmonton, Victoria and Vancouver. Cities like Toronto and Vancouver are among the most diverse in Canada. According to 2011 Statistics Canada census, 1.8 million Torontonians speak a language other than French or English most often at home, while In Vancouver,

712,000 people reported speaking a language other than French or English most often at home.

Should the proposed changes go forward, we would see a significant reduction in foreign-language programming especially in prime time, less Canadian content, and significantly less diversity in the languages and ethnic groups served by OMNI programming. We appreciate that broadcasters face many challenges with the constant change in the media landscape. However, the CRTC was created by Parliament to ensure that its objectives for Canadian broadcasting are met. Section 3(1)(d)(iii) of the *Broadcasting Act* states that our broadcasting system should

... through its programming and the employment opportunities arising out of its operations, serve the needs and interests, and reflect the circumstances and aspirations, of Canadian men, women and children, including equal rights, the linguistic duality and multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society and the special place of aboriginal peoples within that society.

We would also like to note that the proposed changes to programming requirements may not have been immediately clear to all intervenors given the technical nature of the information on the website. We note that many intervenors have expressed their support for renewal of OMNI licences and stressed the importance of multilingual programming to many ethnic communities without expressing support for the changes to licence conditions.

In closing, while we support the renewal of broadcast licences for OMNI stations, we respectfully request the Commission to carefully look at Rogers request for changes in licence conditions and that the Commission uphold the important diversity objectives anchored in the *Broadcasting Act*.

We appreciate your consideration of this submission.

Sincerely,



Andrew Cash, MP Davenport



Don Davies, MP Vancouver-Kingsway