

# Canadian Punjabi Advocacy Committee

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June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Mr. Guy Laurence  
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Rogers Communications Inc.  
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Toronto, On M4W 1G9  
Canada

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Dear Mr. Laurence,

## **Re: OMNI TV Punjabi News and other Programs.**

Further to our letter dated May 20th, 2015, we would like to draw your kind attention to the OMNI Punjabi News program already cut from one hour to thirty minutes. In our letter we approached you to avail of an opportunity to have a dialogue with you to express the importance and immediate need to restore the Punjabi News program to its original format. However we are disappointed to mention that to date we have heard nothing from you.

We once again wish to reiterate that as Punjabi speaking Canadians, refuse to accept OMNI TV's attitude to ignore our very serious concerns in this manner. We feel that it is an attempt to distract the community from its right to language and information in its mother tongue.

Canada is a multicultural and multilingual bouquet. It believes in equality and respect for all. We strongly object to the Rogers decision to deprive our communities of the newscasts in Chinese, Punjabi, and Italian languages as well as the diversity programs. The loss of ethnic language media has a detrimental effect upon people, their culture, ethnicity and proud values of their heritage. It creates doubts and shatters integration of immigrants and creates a slippery slope of injustice for them. Ignoring any community's language will slow down building of an integrated Canadian community.

It should be pointed out that aboriginal nations were once devalued and marginalized by ignoring their language and culture. We do not believe that such moves should be allowed for marginalization of other communities at this time. The fact is that Rogers has discontinued the Omni Model and went back on its promise to serve the people who speak Punjabi and other ethnic languages. Language newscasts and diversity programs are a reflection of the MOSAIC of different multilingual communities. It is incumbent upon a huge corporation like Rogers to meet the needs of these communities. It is the only way to create a feeling that every Canadian is

participating and contributing towards making Canada a great country in the world. It is reiterated that more than 200 languages were reported in the 2011 census with Chinese languages continuing to dominate with more than a million people. Punjabi was listed as the next most common foreign language spoken in Canadian households, with 460,000 reporting it as their mother tongue. It is estimated that more than 800,000 Canadians speak and understand Punjabi in Canada.

For us it is important to speak and understand Punjabi because we know that it is not easy to learn it outside our homes. The OMNI Television News Program was watched almost in every household by families consisting of parents, children and grandchildren sitting together in one room. Thus this program has helped us keep our families together and it has provided us a valuable opportunity to discuss our socio-cultural traditions and family values to add richness to the Canadian mosaic and success of the country. Let us not forget that language plays a crucial role in human existence, development, advancement and dignity of a country.

We, therefore, strongly urge upon you to restore the OMNI TV Punjabi News program to its original format as it existed prior to May 7, 2015.

We look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Sgd./.....

Mota Singh Jheeta

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