



February 1, 2018

Dr. Kathryn Ricketts, President
Saskatchewan Arts Alliance
101 - 1150 Eighth Avenue
Regina, SK S4R 1C9

Dear Dr. Ricketts:

Thank you for your email highlighting the importance of the arts in our province and for your thoughtful questions on how I would support the arts and arts education if elected as premier. The answers to your questions are below:

If you are elected leader of the Saskatchewan NDP, what actions will you take to ensure that the arts sector continues to grow, providing opportunities for artists throughout the province?

We have a diverse and strong arts community in our province, incredible artists, and local support for the arts in communities across our province. The arts and local arts initiatives enrich lives, communities, our province. I'd work as a full, supportive, collaborative partner, as well as enjoy, celebrate and showcase the arts and artists.

One of the first things I would do as premier is reintroduce the Film Employment Tax Credit and bring back our film industry. The damage the Sask. Party has done to the film industry is serious, but not irreversible, and I'll work to ensure Saskatchewan has a thriving film industry once again.

I stood should-to-shoulder with our film industry when the Sask. Party devastated it with the elimination of the film tax credit. This short-sighted decision weakened our economy, eliminated jobs and investment, attacked a point of pride in our province and our ability to tell our story and showcase Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan talent. And sadly, it sent so many from our province, including many personal friends and constituents of mine.

I've consulted and worked with many throughout the film industry, and recognize that our soundstage remains a valuable asset to rebuild this valued industry. I also recognize that prompt payment of a film tax credit will help address with the challenge of bridge financing for film makers.

I would also work to invest in SaskCulture, Creative Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Arts Alliance, and the Saskatchewan Arts Board and increase their ability to offer more and more substantial grants to help

Saskatchewan artists create new projects and promote their art across Saskatchewan and around the world.

I'm supportive of the principles of the Status of the Artist legislation and would look forward to passing legislation on this front, and I would work as a full partner to support Indigenous artists in our province.

Our universities and regional colleges are another important part of the fine and performing arts ecosystem in our province. Cuts to our post-secondary institutions have forced universities and colleges to reduce course offerings in the fine arts and hire fewer sessional lecturers – many of whom are artists themselves who rely on sessional work to make ends meet. I would reverse the cuts to our post-secondary institutions and significantly increase their funding so that our universities and colleges can play their proper part in supporting a thriving arts sector in Saskatchewan.

If you are elected leader of the Saskatchewan NDP, what actions will you take to ensure that all children in Saskatchewan have access to excellent arts education?

One of the central commitments I've made in this campaign is to build the most enhanced and engaging classrooms possible – and a key part of that is growing access to high-quality arts education. I would strengthen and support the arts in our pre-K to 12 education system, as well as work with all arts partners in the community to support local arts initiatives. Unfortunately for our students, when money is tight, arts programs can be some of the first things to be cut. I would immediately reverse the cuts to our classrooms and invest to hire more teachers – including arts education teachers.

Thank you again for your questions and for everything the Arts Alliance does to support the arts in our province.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "TRENT". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style with a horizontal line above the letters.

Trent Wotherspoon
Saskatchewan NDP Leadership Candidate