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## STATUS OF THE ARTIST LEGISLATION NO CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION *Fundamental changes needed says ACTRA*

**For Immediate Release:** Toronto, March 29, 2007 – The Status of Ontario Artists Act introduced with Ontario's budget is without substance and is a deep disappointment to ACTRA, the union representing film and television performers.

"This falls far short of what could have been achieved. When the Liberals promised Status of the Artist legislation we understood this to mean they would deliver meaningful results for artists. Instead, all we get is a *Celebrate the Artist Weekend*," stated ACTRA Toronto President Karl Pruner.

Artists are among the most underpaid workers and they are without many of the protections and benefits that other workers enjoy. In the 2003 election the Liberals promised to bring in Status of the Artist legislation to address these concerns. For the past three years artists have been working with a special committee set up by the government to do extensive research on these issues.

The Act, as presented, rightfully recognizes the substantial contribution of artists to the economic and social well being of the province but it fails to provide any solutions to the challenges they face.

"We, along with many other arts groups and individual artists, worked hard to help the government understand the needs of artists through the Minister of Culture's own sub-committee. An extensive report was accepted by the Minister but its recommendations are not reflected in this legislation. This legislation needs to be fundamentally amended if it is going to provide any support to artists," added Pruner. "As it stands, there is little or nothing for artists to celebrate."

ACTRA will press for legislative amendments that include protections for children, income averaging, training, housing support and a process to improve the collective bargaining process for artists.

ACTRA Toronto Performers is the largest organization within ACTRA, representing more than 13,000 of Canada's 21,000 professional performers working in the English-language recorded media in Canada. As an advocate for Canadian culture since 1943, ACTRA is a member-driven organization that continues to secure the rights and respect for the work of professional performers.

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