

*Celebrating 60 Years:
Célébrant 60 ans :*
1951 - 2011

November 16, 2011

Mr. John Traversy
Secretary General
CRTC
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0N2

Dear Mr. Traversy:

Re: Broadcasting Accessibility Fund

I am writing in connection with the call for comments on the establishment of a Broadcasting Accessibility Fund.

Founded in 1951, the March of Dimes (MOD) was created to raise funds to eradicate the threat of polio in Canada. We achieved this through the Marching of Mothers' door-to-door fundraising campaign that contributed to the discovery of the Salk vaccine. Today, our goal is to enhance the independence and community participation of people with physical disabilities, every day, through a wide range of programs and services across the country.

An area of particular concern for us is equal access to all services, including television broadcasting. We have therefore been following with keen interest the hearings that led to the decision to establish a Broadcasting Accessibility Fund. Let me state at the outset that we believe strongly that such a fund is vital to the development of a fully accessible broadcast system in Canada and that we applaud the Commission in recognizing the need for such a fund and making it happen.

We have been more than interested spectators, however, and have participated in the efforts of the Access 2020 coalition to move the issue of accessibility to the forefront of the agenda in Canadian broadcasting. The disability community has a long history of working on societal issues, promoting legislative and regulatory change and is committed to collaborating with all sectors to achieve full inclusion.

We are concerned that broadcasters are only giving minimal attention to the issue of accessibility and have been frankly dismayed by their response to date. Some Canadian broadcasters are resisting and delaying change at every opportunity.

With appropriate, informed, accountable management of the Fund, which is very much a tool for change, a lot can be accomplished. We do not want the administration of the Fund to be less than fully committed to the objective of full accessibility and knowledgeable and connected with Canadians with disabilities who are still waiting for full access to their country's broadcast system.

.../2

**HONORARY CAMPAIGN CHAIR /
PRESIDENT HONORAIRE DE
LA CAMPAGNE**

William Shatner

**CHAIR / PRESIDENT DU CONSEIL
D'ADMINISTRATION**

M. Elizabeth Greville, LL.B

**PRESIDENT & CEO /
DIRECTRICE GÉNÉRALE ET PDG**

Andria Spindel, M.S.W.



**A United Way Agency
Un Organisme Centraide**

ISO 9001:2008 Certified 026026

**Charitable Registration No. (BN) /
N° d'enreg. d'œuvre de bienf. (NE)**

87958 5214 RR0001

**One Stop: Opportunities for Independence
Guichet unique : un monde de possibilités d'autonomie**

*Celebrating 60 Years:
Célébrant 60 ans :*
1951 - 2011

-2-

In our work on accessibility we have consistently been impressed with the effectiveness of Media Access Canada (MAC) in their many undertakings ranging from standards developments to monitoring rates and quality of accessible content. We feel strongly that this is the organization that can best administer this fund to ensure that it accomplishes what we in the disability sector of the community see as its core mandate.

It is for this reason that we are writing to put our support behind MAC and call for them to be selected to administer this fund and lead the way to a 100% accessible broadcast day.

Sincerely,



Andria Spindel
President & CEO

**HONORARY CAMPAIGN CHAIR /
PRESIDENT HONORAIRE DE
LA CAMPAGNE**

William Shatner

**CHAIR / PRESIDENT DU CONSEIL
D'ADMINISTRATION**

M. Elizabeth Greville, LL.B

**PRESIDENT & CEO /
DIRECTRICE GÉNÉRALE ET PDG**

Andria Spindel, M.S.W.



**A United Way Agency
Un Organisme Centraide**

ISO 9001:2008 Certified 026026

**Charitable Registration No. (BN) /
N° d'enreg. d'œuvre de bienf. (NE)**
87958 5214 RR0001

One Stop: Opportunities for Independence
Guichet unique : un monde de possibilités d'autonomie