



Invite your MP this summer!

Dear BCMA member,

The Canadian Museums Association (CMA) and the British Columbia Museums Association (BCMA) encourage you to invite your Member of Parliament to visit your museum this summer.

Why?

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage undertook last year a study on “the state of Canadian museums” and will likely resume its work on this study in the fall. Having the members of the Standing Committee, or even the Minister of Canadian Heritage, hear from their colleagues about the “state of museums” – and your important work – could have a positive impact on recommendations regarding museums.

This is an exciting time for museums in British Columbia. BCMA is honoured to administer the *British Columbia/Canada 150: Celebrating B.C. Communities and Their Contributions to Canada* program on behalf of the Province of British Columbia. This program has invested \$7.6 million in 220 projects in 150 communities across the province, which will create a lasting legacy for B.C. communities and rich opportunities for British Columbians to engage with our province’s history and culture. Earlier this year, BCMA signed a historic agreement with the BC Library Association and Archives Association of BC that formalizes cooperation among the GLAM sector (galleries, libraries, archives and museums) to share expertise, embark on collaborative research projects, explore public outreach opportunities and identify joint funding ventures to strengthen the sector.

How?

You may want to begin by sending an invitation letter to your MP (you can find the address by entering your postal code at www.ourcommons.ca/en and then look up the constituency office). You can follow-up with a call to the constituency office.

When?

MPs will be in their ridings from June 26 to September 15 while the House of Commons is in recess.

What to say?

If your MP does visit, in addition to talking about your museum, you can speak about:

- **The need to review the heritage programs at the Department of Canadian Heritage.** The heritage programs should be reviewed and modernized, allowing for an appropriate investment of new funds – funding is at the same level as it was in 1972. You can point out difficulties you may be having in receiving federal funding.
- **A CMA proposal to create the *Canadians Supporting Their Museums Fund*, a five-year initiative to increase private donations from individuals and corporations enabling museums and heritage organizations to become more self-sustaining.** The fund would match private sector donations for the purpose of contributing to a museum's endowment or other initiatives such as research and preservation. The fund would require \$50 million per year.
- If you are employing summer students through the **Young Canada Works** program, you may want to ensure that the MP meets them.

If he/she seems willing to help:

- Suggest that he/she speak with colleagues who are members of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage about the visit and the need to modernize programs for museums*.
- Suggest that he/she speak with or write to the Minister of Canadian Heritage about the importance of funding for museums.

Take photos!

- Send one to the MP.
- You can tweet it (and please include @musecdn and @BCMuseumsAssn for a retweet) or send it to the contact below and the CMA will tweet it.

For more information, please contact Alyssa Polinsky, Interim Executive Director, BC Museums Association, apolinsky@museumsassn.bc.ca or 250-356-5700 or Michel Gérin, Director of Programs and Public Affairs, Canadian Museums Association, mgerin@museums.ca or 613-567-0099, ext. 225).

We thank you for your collaboration and wish you a great summer and a pleasant MP visit!



John McAvity
Executive Director and CEO
Canadian Museums Association



Alyssa Polinsky
Interim Executive Director
BC Museums Association

*The members of the Standing Committee are:

Liberals: Hon. Hedy Fry (Chair), Pierre Breton, Julie Dabrusin, Seamus O'Regan, Darrell Samson, Dan Vandal
Conservatives: Larry Maguire (Vice-chair), Hon. Peter Van Loan
NDP: Pierre Nantel (vice-chair)