



The voice of live
music in Canada
La voix du spectacle
musical au Canada

January 14, 2022

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance

The Honourable Mary Ng
Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development

Re: CEBA and RRRF Relief for Live Music Businesses

Dear Ministers Freeland and Ng,

I am writing to you today on behalf of Canada's beleaguered live music industry in regards to the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) and the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF), which have both been crucial in supporting businesses and organizations across Canada to mitigate the financial pressures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Canadian Live Music Association (CLMA) represents both for and non-profit small, medium and large organizations, venues, concert promoters, festivals, clubs, performing arts centres, talent agencies, suppliers of goods and services – and many other stakeholders whose work brings exponential economic, social and cultural benefit to the province.

CEBA provided businesses and not-for-profits with interest-free loans, while the RRRF supported businesses that were ineligible for other federal supports or businesses already receiving COVID relief but required additional liquidity support.

COVID-19 has had a disproportionate economic impact on the live music industry's recovery.

As the pandemic continues to result in restrictions and closures throughout Canada, live music businesses are struggling to survive as revenue losses, job losses, layoffs, increasing debt, and uncertainty to reopening are putting businesses at risk of financial insolvency and permanent closure. These factors affect debt repayment and financial solvency capacities, especially for the hardest-hit businesses.

We thank the Government of Canada for its support of small business recovery through the recent extension of the interest-free repayment period for CEBA and RRRF loans from their previous end date of December 31, 2022 to December 31, 2023. However, since the start of the pandemic, many live music businesses have taken on debt that will take at least 2 years to resolve; our members continue to report a bleak outlook for the future. As such, while this extension will provide some relief, it will not be enough.

In support of other associations, such as the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO), and on behalf of the CLMA, I urge you to consider increasing both CEBA's and the RRRF's maximum loan forgiveness amount by up to \$10,000 if the balance of the loan is repaid by the end of the 0% interest-free grace period; and extending the interest-free repayment period for CEBA loans and RRRF loans to December 31, 2024.

These changes will help reduce the financial burden many businesses and organizations are currently facing.

We need, and thank you for, your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erin Benjamin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot above the 'i' in Benjamin.

Ms. Erin Benjamin
President & CEO
Canadian Live Music Association
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