

Cable Public Affairs Channel Inc.
La chaîne d'affaires publiques par câble inc.

Opening remarks – BNC CRTC 2025-2
July 2, 2025

Good morning Vice-Chair Théberge, Vice-Chair Scott, Commissioners and Commission staff.

My name is Christa Dickenson, President and CEO of CPAC. I am joined today by Jeremy Clark, CPAC's Chief Operating Officer and Joel Fortune, Secretary of CPAC's board and our regulatory counsel.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear at this hearing.

The Commission set out two key goals in its Notice of Consultation:

- a sustainable model for the delivery and discoverability of diverse Canadian and Indigenous content; and
- a fair and competitive marketplace.

How does CPAC and our programming relate to those goals?

CPAC's programming consists of two broad categories.

First, we provide Canadians with comprehensive coverage of the proceedings of Parliament. On our linear channel, the House of Commons takes precedence, and Canadians can easily watch our democracy in action, live, as it is taking place. In addition, we provide "taped" coverage of the Senate of Canada and its committees under the terms of our agreement with the Senate.

Second, CPAC offers a range of complementary public affairs programming. This includes our longstanding, daily programs *L'Essentiel* and *Prime Time Politics* and other special programs. For example, during the recent federal election we provided extensive coverage of the Leaders' tours, in-depth looks into 34 ridings throughout the country, daily press conferences and announcements, and bilingual election night programming – with analysis provided in both French and English in the same program, something that is unique to CPAC.

Our digital service, cpac.ca, duplicates and supplements the content provided on our linear feed. This includes Supreme Court hearings, public enquiries, live scrums, press conferences, speeches and conferences and other events that make up Canada's civic life. All of this content is archived for on-demand access – together with historical Parliamentary content dating back to 1977.

La diversité et la profondeur de la programmation de CPAC n'ont pas d'équivalent dans le système de radiodiffusion. Nous offrons au public canadien une vitrine sur la vie politique du pays et nous la rendons facilement accessible au moyen de notre chaîne linéaire et de notre service numérique.

CPAC est également un élément important de l'écosystème canadien de l'information et des affaires publiques. De plus en plus souvent, d'autres journalistes nous disent que la couverture neutre et approfondie des affaires publiques par CPAC les aide à faire leur travail et leur permet d'accéder à ces événements d'une manière qui serait autrement impossible.

La programmation de CPAC fait partie du contenu diversifié qui devrait être offert au public canadien par le biais du système de radiodiffusion.

CPAC et nos émissions jouent un rôle – voire même un rôle exceptionnel – de « sauvegarder, enrichir et renforcer » la structure culturelle et politique du Canada, un élément important de la politique canadienne en matière de radiodiffusion.

How does CPAC and its programming relate to a fair and competitive marketplace?

CPAC is a non—commercial service. We carry no advertising and we strive to be complementary to other broadcasters rather than competitive – offering programming that they largely don't.

One question in this proceeding is how the contributions that make CPAC possible as a public service can be fairly shared by different players in the broadcasting system.

CPAC has been supported for more than thirty years by Canada's BDUs. CPAC has been present online since 1999 – and this online presence has grown over the years. All of these activities have been supported largely by our funding base – BDU wholesale fees. Bill C-11 now expressly recognizes the online sector as a part of the broadcasting system. It is time for this sector to support services, such as CPAC, that are considered to be of exceptional importance to the achievement of broadcasting policy objectives.

For this purpose CPAC supports the establishment of a Services of Exceptional Importance Fund. The fund would receive contributions from the online sector and then distribute these funds to eligible recipients. Ideally, the fund would be as frictionless as possible and based on a funding model set by the Commission.

The SEIF presents an opportunity for contributions from the online sector to support exceptional public interest services.

At the same time, establishing the fund would create a more equitable framework for the financial contributions that make these services possible – to balance the contributions made by Canadian BDUs for many years.

CPAC believes that the SEIF is a relatively straight-forward and fair mechanism available to advance broadcasting policy objectives – part of a sustainable system to support exceptional services in the years to come.

[Merci de nous avoir permis de faire cette présentation.](#)

We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.