



THE ART BABBITT APPRECIATION SOCIETY

February 24, 2018

To the Panel Members; Barry Dong, Michael Fleming, and Sandra Banister.

As President of The Art Babbitt Appreciation Society (ABAS), I am writing this submission letter pertaining to the upcoming Labour Relations Code Review. ABAS is a grassroots organization made up of animation artists working to unionize the Animation and Visual Effects sector in Vancouver with the help of IATSE. We consider this the best path to deal with an industry that is rampant with scandal and illegal employment practices, the most pressing of which are wage theft - most commonly through overtime abuse - and incredibly low wages, that sometimes fall well below the minimum wage.

Wage theft happens in our industry in many ways. We have been forced to sign fraudulent time sheets; we have been pressured or bullied into working past 8 hours with zero overtime compensation; we have been fired and let go without having been given the proper disciplinary measures or severance; and worst of all, we have seen all of this become normalized. Unfortunately, the culture of our industry has grown into a culture where our rights as workers are being ignored.

We currently see no other recourse to secure our rights and a liveable financial future than by forming a union. Our greatest challenges with the Labour Relations Code relate specifically to the forming of a union, as it is especially challenging due to a few factors unique to our industry. Animation artists usually work short contracts of 6-8 months, and jump from studio to studio with regularity. In addition, we must organize not by studio, but by production and season as well, as each is incorporated and staffed as its own entity. While a large majority of our sector would like to see a union, getting those people together on the same season of the same show at the same time, is quite a challenge. Repealing the certification vote and returning to automatic certification would absolutely help streamline the process for us.

Therefore, we ask that you look at these two key issues in your review:

- Removal of the Certification Vote/Automatic certification
- Expanding the 90 day window for Union Authorization cards

Sincerely yours,

President, The Art Babbitt Appreciation Society