



## NEWS RELEASE

British Columbia Civil Liberties Association  
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For immediate release

### **BCCLA calls on VANOC to remove restriction on artists**

The BCCLA is calling on the Vancouver Olympic Organizing Committee (VANOC) to withdraw a clause in its artist contract that limits free expression. The clause requires artists to “refrain from making any negative or derogatory remarks respecting VANOC, the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Olympic movement generally, Bell and/or other sponsors associated with VANOC.”

“If VANOC were a purely private corporation, one could understand these kinds of provisions,” said Robert Holmes, President of the BCCLA. “But VANOC gets a huge amount of government funding, government appoints 11 of the 20 members of the board, and government directs the business plan of VANOC. How can our government attempt to limit artists’ free expression in this way?”

The artistic director for the Salt Lake City Olympics was quoted by CTV as reporting that there was nothing that censored artists in relation to anything artists wished to say about the Olympics.

“We are calling on VANOC to notify all artists that it is has signed to this contract that VANOC will not rely on this clause, and that artists, if they wish, are free to criticize VANOC, the 2010 Olympic games, the Olympic movement generally, and sponsors,” said Holmes. “Critique is one of the key roles of artists. Art without free speech is simply propaganda.”

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