

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

2ND SESSION, 41ST LEGISLATURE, ONTARIO
66 ELIZABETH II, 2017

Bill 186

An Act to establish the Poet Laureate of Ontario in memory of Gord Downie

Mr. P. Hatfield

Private Member's Bill

1st Reading December 5, 2017

2nd Reading

3rd Reading

Royal Assent



EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Bill establishes the office of the Poet Laureate of Ontario in memory of Gord Downie. The qualifications and selection process for the Poet Laureate are set out. The responsibilities of the Poet Laureate include promoting art and literacy, celebrating Ontario and its people and raising the profile of Ontario poets.

An Act to establish the Poet Laureate of Ontario in memory of Gord Downie

Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

Poet Laureate of Ontario established

1 (1) There shall be a Poet Laureate of Ontario who is an officer of the Assembly.

Appointment

(2) The Lieutenant Governor in Council shall appoint the Poet Laureate of Ontario on the address of the Assembly for a term not exceeding two years.

Qualifications

(3) The person appointed under subsection (2) shall be the person selected in accordance with section 2 and shall meet the following qualifications:

1. The individual must be a person whose primary residence is Ontario and who has resided in Ontario for a period of at least six months during the 12 months preceding the selection.
2. The individual must have published at least one volume of poetry within the last ten years or must demonstrate that his or her body of work over the years has brought honour to himself or herself and to Ontario.

Term of office

(4) The Poet Laureate of Ontario shall hold office for the term specified in the appointment and shall continue to hold office after the expiry of his or her term until a successor is appointed.

Removal

(5) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may remove the Poet Laureate of Ontario for cause on the address of the Assembly.

Selection committee

2 (1) The Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport shall, every two years or more frequently if necessary, establish a selection committee to select a Poet Laureate of Ontario, which committee shall consist of the following individuals:

1. Two members of the Province of Ontario Council for the Arts as established by the *Arts Council Act*, who have knowledge of literary activity in Ontario.
2. Subject to subsection (2), the current holder of the office of Poet Laureate of Ontario.

Same

(2) For the purposes of paragraph 2 of subsection (1), if no Poet Laureate of Ontario has been appointed or if the current holder of the office is unavailable, the individuals mentioned in paragraph 1 of subsection (1) shall select a third individual to form the selection committee.

Responsibilities

3 (1) The Poet Laureate of Ontario shall,

- (a) promote art and literacy in Ontario;
- (b) celebrate Ontario and its people;
- (c) raise the profile of Ontario poets;
- (d) raise public awareness of poetry and of the spoken word;
- (e) act as a spokesperson for literature in general and poetry in particular; and
- (f) provide a focal point for the expression of Ontario culture and heritage through the literary arts.

Same

(2) In carrying out the responsibilities set out in subsection (1), the Poet Laureate of Ontario shall undertake activities including, but not limited to,

- (a) writing poetry, occasionally for use in the Legislature if called upon by the Speaker or the Lieutenant Governor;
- (b) visiting schools, presenting or arranging poetry readings and assisting with writing workshops or other activities;
- (c) advising the Legislative Library regarding the collection of the Library and acquisitions that may enrich its cultural holdings; and
- (d) performing such other duties as may be requested by the Speaker, the Lieutenant Governor or the Legislative Library in relation to this Act.

Honorarium

4 (1) The Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport may pay an honorarium to the Poet Laureate of Ontario.

Reimbursement of expenses

(2) The Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport may provide reimbursement of expenses related to travel within Ontario and other expenses of the Poet Laureate of Ontario related to the purposes of this Act, if the expenses have been approved in advance by the Minister.

Commencement

5 This Act comes into force on the day it receives Royal Assent.

Short title

6 The short title of this Act is the *Poet Laureate of Ontario Act (In Memory of Gord Downie), 2017*.