

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

1ST SESSION, 42ND LEGISLATURE, ONTARIO
68 ELIZABETH II, 2019

Bill 6

(Chapter 16 of the Statutes of Ontario, 2019)

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

Mr. P. Hatfield

1st Reading	July 30, 2018
2nd Reading	September 20, 2018
3rd Reading	December 12, 2019
Royal Assent	December 12, 2019



EXPLANATORY NOTE

*This Explanatory Note was written as a reader's aid to Bill 6 and does not form part of the law.
Bill 6 has been enacted as Chapter 16 of the Statutes of Ontario, 2019.*

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 Assembly shall, by order, appoint a Poet Laureate of Ontario.

Qualifications

(3) The person appointed under subsection (2) 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 10 years or must demonstrate that his or her body of work over the years has brought honour to himself or herself and to Ontario.

Terms of office

(4) The Poet Laureate of Ontario shall hold office for a term not exceeding two years and shall continue to hold office after the expiry of his or her term until a successor is appointed.

Removal

(5) The Assembly may, by order, remove the Poet Laureate of Ontario from office, or suspend him or her, for cause.

Selection by panel or unanimous vote

2 Any order of the Assembly appointing an individual as the Poet Laureate of Ontario is not valid unless,

- (a) the individual has first been selected by unanimous agreement of the members of a selection panel consisting of,
 - (i) the Speaker, who shall also serve as the chair of the panel,
 - (ii) the Ontario Legislative Librarian,
 - (iii) two members of the Province of Ontario Council for the Arts who have knowledge of literary activity in Ontario, jointly selected by the Speaker and the Ontario Legislative Librarian, and
 - (iv) the current Poet Laureate of Ontario, if any; or
- (b) the order appointing the Poet Laureate of Ontario is passed by a vote of all the members of the Assembly present during the vote.

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 Board of Internal Economy may authorize the Speaker to pay an honorarium to the Poet Laureate of Ontario.

Reimbursement of expenses

(2) The Board of Internal Economy may authorize the Speaker to provide reimbursement to the Poet Laureate of Ontario for expenses related to travel and other expenses related to the purposes of this Act, if the expenses have been approved in advance by the Speaker.

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), 2019*.