

# **CBC (Ottawa) Broadcast - Ontario Today**

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12:40 Taxing Symphony Orchestras

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Stackelberg

phoner

David Hayward

London Symphony orchestra general manager

## **INTRO:**

Orchestra London continues its battle with the taxman this week. Last night officials from the orchestra went before London city council looking for an emergency loan. It's not money to help keep the music going....it's money to keep the taxman happy. Last month, Orchestra London and The Windsor Symphony were audited by Ontario's Ministry of Finance. The ministry ruled that the symphonies should have been paying Ontario's Employer Health Tax on behalf of their employees. But the Symphonies say they shouldn't have to pay because the musicians are self-employed. Orchestra London is now facing a tax bill of more than 128-thousand dollars. David Hayward is the orchestra's general manager. We've reached him at his home in London.

### **1) What happened at the council meeting last night?**

got an emergency loan to cover the 128-thousand incase they have to pay it up front while they appeal the decision. Council realized the urgency of this and voted unanimously to lend the money.

### **2) So you're going to appeal this?**

Going to appeal the tax bill...also both London and Windsor's orchestras will be lobbying the government to change the status of orchestral musicians from employees of the symphony to independant contractors.

### **3) Why shouldn't the orchestra pay these taxes? ( businesses are expected to)**

It's a big financial burden on the orchestras. haven't paid in the past and they want to remain with the status quo...orchestra players are self-employed and they pay the tax when it applies to them (i.e after a certain income level) so the government gets its taxes in the end anyway.

### **4) Could something like this wipe you out financially down the road?**

it would be very hard on any symphony...already cash strapped if they have to increase their budget to compensate for this they'll have to tighten up someplace else.

5) Should other symphonies around the province be joining in your fight?

yes because they'll be next and he expects they will be helping out with this.

6) Are you optimistic about the outcome of this?

Uncertain, but MPP's are sympathetic to their cause...the finance ministry is looking at the situation to see how to proceed.

**EXTRO:**

Thank you. We'll be watching for the outcome... That was David Hayward. He's the General Manager of the Orchestra London.