

*Gwydion Suilebhan:* Hello, everybody. I'm Gwydion Suilebhan, your cochair of the Political Engagement Initiative. It's been a very busy year for us so I'm just going to give you some of the highlights then hand things off to my cochair, Nikkole Salter, to talk about what's coming next.

So, working backwards from today, in February, in partnership with the Dramatists Legal Defense Fund, we reached out to about a dozen law clinics about establishing a small claims copyright court legal clinic. In January, we partnered with Be an Arts Hero on a letter writing campaign to the Biden/Harris administration intended to invite the new administration to elevate the position of the arts in their priorities for the coming four years.

In last year, in November, we released a first draft of a new civic engagement toolkit designed to help member dramatists take political actions. In October, during the run up to the election, we were very busy. We celebrated Political Engagement Initiative's Civic Engagement Month. We led a Right to Vote campaign. We joined TCG for meetings with Ohio Senator Rob Portman and North Carolina Senator Tim Scott. We supported Be an Arts Hero Dawn campaign. We hosted a healthcare town hall with testimonials about navigating health insurance. We partnered with DLDF again for Band Together 2020, highlighting writers who have been censored and cut from the theatrical canon due to America's racial prejudices. And over the spring/summer and fall before that, we hosted a Be an Arts Hero town hall, participated in antiracism training and led a Protect Your Post Office campaign.

And with that, I am going to kick it over to Nikkole. Take it away.

*Nikkole Salter:* Thank you, Gwydion. Yes, my name is Nikkole Salter. I'm a proud DG member and I'm also the cochair of the Political Engagement Initiative. We are a committee dedicated to promoting political engagement among DG members but were also dedicated to supporting members in their own self-driven political engagement efforts, especially regarding issues that are important to the collective well-being of our dramatist community. Let me loop you into what's next.

It's our goal to develop a national network of politically engaged dramatists as a political force worthy of the attention of those who control the systems and determine the rules by which dramatists are governed. We want to qualify our voting power and our cultural influence with numbers and create pathways for nationwide organization and mobilization of our membership to

use in political engagement work. Just as you come to Business Affairs for all of your contract needs, you'll be able to come to the PEI for all of the help that you need for membership for your political mobilization needs.

While our chief goal is to help you politically engage and mobilize with the full strength and power of your community, we understand that there are some universal needs within our field that we can help organize around as a committee. Last year, in the face of COVID, and in the face of the tumult of our field, we took on the charge of centering gig worker healthcare advocacy as a centerpiece of our most immediate political work. Our strategy is to partner with advocates already working to protect healthcare accessibility for gig workers and now that the election is over, our reach outs are well underway. More on that soon.

Also on the immediate horizon is a national write-in campaign to garner public support and to directly address our local, state and federal representatives in our healthcare addressee efforts. We plan to assemble a pathway for op-ed writing in every region to support the campaign and we hope that you will participate with your most persuasive writing.

We are also drafting a declaration of healthcare rights for gig workers as a centerpiece of our advocacy campaign. And in conjunction with the launch of the PEI Political Engagement Toolkit, you can expect a nationwide town hall rollout with teachings that introduce the political toolkit platform to membership and encourage political engagement with the power of the pen.

And we are also looking to recruit you, yes you, to get involved with the committee on the council level. The cool thing about the PEI is that you only need be a DG member to be eligible for participation. And our goal is to have every DG region represented on our committee to increase our organizational efficacy.

So we need you. And if you're interested, please reach out to the PEI via the DG offices to let us know. Thanks so much for listening. Rock on.

*[End of Audio]*