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Dear Ministers,

I am writing to you today, as a resident of Fort McMurray, Alberta, to express my opposition to the following policies that are proposed as part of the UCP AGM.

Policy Proposal 8 - The requirement for teachers to notify parents when students change their name or pronouns

Policy Proposal 9 – The elimination of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion offices in post-secondary institutions

Policy Proposal 17- The creation of a Parental Bill of Rights

Policy Proposal 29 – Banning incarcerated transgender women from women's prisons

These proposed policies will cause Albertans harm that will be direct and swift. They will put the lives and safety of marginalized children and youth at risk and will remove safe, inclusive spaces where they can live happily and freely. These policies are built on a basis of misinformation and hateful rhetoric, and will do nothing to protect children. One of these policies has already been deemed unconstitutional by a provincial court in Saskatchewan.

In both the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Alberta Human Rights Act, we have protected the rights and freedoms of all people on the basis of gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, and age. It goes without saying that these constitutional and legal protections should extend to our most vulnerable. The proposed policies are unconstitutional and, as Albertans, we should not tolerate any policy that violates the dignity and threatens the human rights of any person in our province or country.

The UCP claims to be the party of individual freedoms. To enact a bill of parental rights, takes away the Charter rights of children and youth, and in these policies specifically, the rights of trans and non-binary youth. It is a parent's job to protect and nurture their child, but that does not give them the right to take away their autonomy. Not all homes are loving and safe. For some trans and non-binary children, school is the only safe space where they can be themselves and express themselves without retribution or rejection. We know from research that when there is a lack of safe, affirming spaces, rates of: youth homelessness, school drop-out rates, youth suicide and suicide ideation increase. We must continue to protect the privacy, human rights, and safety of vulnerable trans and non-binary children and youth. Many policies are already in place within Albertan public school boards, within the Alberta Education Act, and professional code of ethics that ensure parents and guardians are informed partners in their

child's education, and that all decisions surrounding the safety and well-being of children are treated with the highest ethical regard.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is how Alberta grows to the best of its potential. It is through embracing and supporting our differences that we find new, innovative solutions and remain competitive. Ensuring all people are treated equitably takes nothing away from any other person or institution, and is the path to truly prosperous communities in our province. By eliminating Diversity, Equity and Inclusion offices in Post-secondary institutions, it undermines the important education and advocacy work these offices execute for historically under-represented and under-resourced groups of Albertans. Eliminating offices which focus on creating equity and championing inclusion communicates a de-valuing of diverse perspectives in Higher Education. It will contribute to continued lack of representation and limited access to opportunities for minority groups.

Banning transgender women from women's prisons directly violates protected Human Rights by discriminating on the basis of gender, gender identity, and gender expression. All incarcerated people deserve to be treated in a way that preserves their dignity and their human rights. Proposed policies such as this not only denies transgender women their right to live as their true gender, but will further contribute to the already disproportionate amount of violence directed toward transgender women.

Diversity is not a threat, it is a fact. It is a strength of this province and our social and economic potential. Inclusion is not a belief to agree or disagree with, it is the actions that any government which claims to represent ALL Albertans should be consistently taking and upholding in all policy considerations.

These policies are not reflective of equal opportunities and freedoms for all Albertans. Identities that are protected by Human Rights legislation and the Constitution should not be up for debate or negotiation in policy. I urge you to listen to the voices of your constituents to not only vote against these policies, but to also speak out against them as they are causing division, vitriol, and discrimination in our communities.

Thank you,