



December 13, 2019

**The Honourable David Lametti**  
**Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada**  
**House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A2**

Dear Honourable Minister Lametti,

Congratulations on your election to the House of Commons and your appointment as Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. I write to you on behalf of Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights (formerly Planned Parenthood Canada), a progressive, pro-choice charitable organization committed to advancing and upholding sexual and reproductive health and rights in Canada and globally.

As sexual rights champions, we are passionately committed to advancing laws and policies that reflect and promote the highest international standards of human rights, to which everyone in Canada, and around the world is entitled. With that in mind, we wrote today, with a focused and urgent appeal in response to your mandate letter from the Prime Minister. We are extremely disappointed to note that your mandate letter does not include directives to repeal the Protection of Exploited Persons and Communities Act (PECA), nor instructions to end the criminalization of sex work in Canada.

**We urge you to take swift action, as Justice Minister, to address the laws and policies in Canada that perpetuate the ongoing violation of sex workers rights under Canadian law.**

We ask that any law reform enacted to address the criminalization of sex work being in full compliance with the Supreme Court of Canada's 2014 Bedford decision, as well as the domestically and internationally enshrined rights to non-discrimination, health and safety and bodily autonomy.

Throughout the recent election, alongside our allies from the Canadian Alliance for Sex Work Law Reform (a coalition of 27 sex worker rights organizations across the country), Action Canada circulated a statement of solidarity with sex workers signed by more than 150 justice-seeking civil society organizations, who represent millions of people in every part of the country. The first sentence of this statement condemned the criminalization, over-policing, and surveillance of sex workers, and called for decriminalization as the first step to protecting and respecting the human rights of all sex workers. The statement also called for the full repeal of all criminal and immigration laws that target sex workers.

**We echo these calls to action towards the decriminalization of sex work and urge you to immediately repeal PECA as a first step towards protecting the health and safety of sex workers.**

Furthermore, we ask that you work together with all relevant Ministers to engage in meaningful consultations with sex workers and their communities to support the policy and law reforms necessary to ensure an end to acts of targeting, harassment and surveillance of sex workers that enabled and perpetrated by the state, and government employees including police officers, immigration, and border control personnel, health care providers, and social workers. We ask that you work together with sex workers towards ensuring the equity and human rights to which they are entitled.

As reflected by the policy resolution passed at the most recent Liberal Party of Canada Policy Convention, criminalization of sexuality, gender, and reproduction—historically and today—causes grave harm. Not long ago, abortion was a crime in Canada; people were harmed and killed as a result. At the time, not unlike with sex work, the Supreme Court of Canada intervened in order to strike the provisions in the Criminal Code that actively threatened women's safety and equality by restricting access to abortion. The federal government has the power to swiftly amend criminal provisions



which are shown to harm people and violate human rights. The ongoing ways in which individuals are criminalized, despite their entitlement to the full range of sexual and reproductive rights, must end.

**We look forward to working with you to implement these and other reforms in Canada and welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the above in greater detail.**

Sincerely,



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CC: The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.