



Smoky Lake County

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May 31, 2021

Hon. Kaycee Madu
Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, Deputy House Leader
424 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Email: ministryofjustice@gov.ab.ca

Sent Via: E-Mail

Re: Letter of Support to retain the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in Alberta

Minister,

On behalf of Smoky Lake County Council, I am writing to express our ongoing support for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) as our province's police force. In doing so, I note that we are joining dozens of other rural and urban municipalities in expressing deep concern at the prospect of replacing the same with an Alberta provincial police service (APPS), which the province is currently studying.

During your presentation at the AUMA/RMA Policing Summit in February of 2021, you spoke of Albertans "*demanding democratic, community—based policing, a renewed commitment to improving policing in the province, and the need for police to work with community partners and citizens to ensure effective community policing.*" Minister, I am pleased to say that our community enjoys democratic, community—based policing. Our local RCMP detachment meets with us regularly as part of their commitment to optimal two—way communication that invites, welcomes, and listens to our input, and our detachment also works with our municipality and our citizens as community partners.

The Policing Transition Study being undertaken by our province is in response to the Fair Deal Panel's (FDP recommendation #14: Create an APS to replace RCMP. The FDP reported that 68.5% of respondents were) from Calgary and Edmonton regions. Calgary and Edmonton have their own police services, which should be considered when studying the transition from the RCMP. Another FDP finding was that only 35% of respondents supported the idea of creating an APS.

Finally, in the Alberta Police Federation survey from October of 2020, it was found that "replacing the RCMP is viewed as a least helpful measure tested to improve Alberta's place in Canada." Only 8% say replacing the RCMP helps a lot, only 6% support replacing the RCMP, 81% of Albertans

served by RCMP are satisfied with the service they receive, and 70% of Albertans oppose replacing the RCMP with an expensive new provincial police service.

There is so much convincing support for the RCMP in Alberta, and, with the strong and effective RCMP that serve us well in Alberta. Our Council supports the programs, initiatives, and progress of the RCMP in meeting our community's policing demands. We certainly have not seen compelling evidence that replacing the RCMP would result in better outcomes, particularly considering potentially increased operational (and transitional) costs.

Direct consultation with municipalities regarding the creation of an APPS has been inadequate. If municipalities who are served by RCMP detachments are excluded from this conversation, valuable information and feedback is left.

The Alberta Government already implemented a new police funding model which requires that communities under 5,000 such as ours are already increasingly paying substantially more for policing. Continually doing more with less is untenable.

In closing, I again reiterate our Council's support for the RCMP remaining as Alberta's police force. Smoky Lake County enjoys a positive and collaborative relationship with our local RCMP detachment, and we hope that the province will heed the concerns of many communities, rescind the ongoing study, and instead focus on other more productive options moving forward.

If we can provide any further clarity on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact myself, or Smoky Lake County CAO Gene Sobolewski at 780-656-3730.

Sincerely,



Craig Lukinuk, Reeve

Smoky Lake County

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cc: Hon. Jason Kenney, Alberta Premier <premier@gov.ab.ca>
Hon. Rick McIver, Interim Minister of Municipal Affairs <minister.municipalaffairs@gov.ab.ca>
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