MUNICIPAL DISTRICT
BONNYVILLE NO. 87

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January 20, 2021

Village of Rycroft
PO Box 360
Rycroft, AB T0H 3A0

Attn: Mayor and Council

RE: Need for a Stronger Western Canadian Municipal Advocate

The past few years have presented convincing evidence of the continued lack of advocacy and blatant disregard at the federal level for Western Canada's needs and one of its highly significant industries that impacts us all: the natural resources industry. Our Council here at the Municipal District of Bonnyville (M.D.) is beyond frustrated with this lack of effective representation that Western Canadian municipalities receive.

Currently, our only voice at the national table is that of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). From their website, FCM states they *"...advocate for municipalities to be sure their citizens' needs are reflected in federal policies and programs. Year after year, our work benefits <u>every</u> municipal government and taxpayer in Canada, and our programming delivers tools that help municipalities tackle <u>local</u> challenges."*

Question: Do you feel that FCM advocates for the needs of your municipality or western Canada?

Question: Does the annual FCM Conference agenda/tours provide relevant value for your municipality?

Question: Are the needs of western Canada different than those of eastern Canada, and if so, is it time we entertain the idea of a WCM (Western Canadian Municipalities)?

To their credit, FCM did add a Western Economic Solutions Taskforce as one of their 15 program areas. Unfortunately, this initiative – which was created to mitigate the genuine alienation and hostility western Canadian municipalities experienced at the 2019 FCM Annual Conference held in Quebec City – has not produced any real results.

Our hope is that this letter will spark the much-needed conversation and potential solution to this long-standing issue. We sincerely request that you and your Council take the time to truly reflect on the level of service you are receiving from your current federal advocate. Are they truly the federal voice advocating for your citizens and your municipality?

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The M.D. and many other communities across Alberta and western Canada are proud supporters and partners of the oil and gas industry. We wish to be a part of a solution that supports industry competitiveness rather than be forced to absorb Ontario's and Quebec's concepts of crippling changes that impact our municipal sustainability.

Thank you in advance for your Council's reflection on this topic and we look forward to hearing any feedback you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Greg Sawchuk
Reeve

cc: Mr. Barry Morishita, President, Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
Mr. Paul McLauchlin, President, Rural Municipalities of Alberta

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