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September 22, 2025

Honorable Minister Adriana LaGrange
Minister of Primary and Preventive
Health Services
224 Legislature Building
10800- 97 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Minister LaGrange,

RE: Urgent Action Needed to Address EMS Shortage in McLennan

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the ongoing shortage of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel in McLennan. This issue has reached a critical point, significantly impacting the quality and timeliness of emergency care available to residents in M.D. of Smoky River No.130 and surrounding areas.

Recent reports indicate frequent limited EMS coverage, delayed response time, frequent and ongoing cancelling of patient transfers. Large areas are left at risk.

This shortfall of EMS coverage has marked increase calls for medical assistance therefore placing tremendous pressure on our local fire department.

The shortage is not merely a staffing issue—it is a public safety concern. When emergency services are stretched thin, lives are at risk. Our community deserves reliable, timely, and professional emergency care, and it is imperative that we take immediate steps to address this crisis.

I urge the Province to consider the following actions:

1. **Implement a "one-out, one-in" policy:** Ensure rural EMS stations, such as McLennan retain staff until qualified replacements are secured.
2. **Introduce Rural Incentives:** Offer specific supports working in rural areas housing subsidies, relocation assistance and signing bonuses.
3. **Explore Training and Placement Programs:** Programs to encourage EMS students and new graduates to train and serve in rural communities.

McLennan Hospital has long been a cornerstone of our community's healthcare system. Ensuring it is adequately staffed with trained EMS professionals is not just a matter of operational efficiency—it is a moral imperative.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I am confident that with collaborative effort and decisive action, we can restore and strengthen our emergency medical services for the safety and well-being of all residents.

Sincerely,

Joseph Zdeb
Mayor

Cc: Honourable Dan William, Minister of Municipal Affairs
Honourable Todd Loewen, MLA
Honourable Matt Jones, Minister of Hospital and Surgical Health Services
Town of McLennan
Village of Donnelly
M.D. of Smoky River No. 130
Town of Falher
Northern Alberta Elected Leaders -NAEL