



**5 February 2025. Sent from: [northernspirit@united-church.ca](mailto:northernspirit@united-church.ca),  
8510 95 Avenue NW, Edmonton AB T6C 1Y7**

**Dear Premier of Alberta, Danielle Smith; Hon Adriana LaGrange (Minister of Health); Hon Demetrios Nicolaidis (Minister of Education); Hon Joseph Schow (Minister of Tourism and Sport); and Hon Christina Gray (Leader of the Opposition):**

We, the Northern Spirit Regional Council of The United Church of Canada, demand that you rescind Bills 26, 27, and 29. We represent over 80 communities of faith and five specialised ministries across Alberta north of Red Deer, and we are already witnessing the negative impact of this legislation and its preceding debate in our churches and in the communities they serve.

We reject a society where the rights of some take precedence over the rights of others. Such a society is not in keeping with the commandment to love one another. Our faith leads us to condemn all three bills and their intended impacts.

We believe Albertans want their government to treat all people equitably, to protect everyone's human rights, and to ensure anyone facing barriers to health care are provided with science-based treatments and support to navigate the medical system.

## **This legislation is not about “caring”**

We are outraged that you proclaimed that these laws were made to “care” for Albertans. Caring actions work to reduce harm and pain and increase safety and space. Mandating that teachers and parents silence children and youth's understanding of themselves and the world is not a caring action.

Caring actions require listening to actual needs, including those named by medical professionals and agencies serving gender-diverse populations. Demanding that doctors and other medical professionals deny their patients the best treatment (as based on science and research) is not a caring action. You are, in fact, demanding health care professionals break their oaths to do no harm.

## This legislation violates transgender people's health

The Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Section of the Alberta Medical Association writes: "Sexual health education is essential, especially in an age where misleading and harmful information spreads freely online. Children receiving quality information that helps them make safe and responsible decisions should not be something that parents have to consent to. It should be something that they expect from schools."<sup>1</sup>

As the Section of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry of the Alberta Medical Association continues: "First and foremost, decisions regarding a child's healthcare should rest in the hands of their parents or guardians, working closely with medical professionals. These decisions are intensely personal and complex, involving a careful, nuanced consideration of a child's physical, emotional, and psychological health. Blanket restrictions from the government represent unwanted and unnecessary interference in the medical home."<sup>2</sup>

For example, it is a lie that all current treatments suggested for youth are irreversible. "Puberty blockers delay [puberty's] irreversible changes until a young person is ready and old enough to confirm a particular pubertal path. As per the Canadian Pediatric Society, transgender adolescents who have sought and received hormonal suppression report improved mental health and psychosocial functioning, and lower odds of suicidal ideation."<sup>3</sup>

## This legislation violates transgender people's dignity

Through this legislation, you are insisting that a child's suicidal ideation is less serious than your opinions regarding names and pronouns, again rejecting sound evidence to the contrary. Through this legislation, you are telling children and youth they need to lie to the adults in their lives about who they are.

Names are crucial to wellbeing and dignity. "...simply being able to use their chosen names at home, school, work and with friends contributes to a 71% decrease in symptoms of severe depression and a 65% decrease in suicide attempts for transgender youth."<sup>4</sup>

In banning transgender girls from existing sports leagues on the basis of completely disproven claims about physical advantages, you are harming their dignity, their health, and their ability to take part in the activities they love.

**(Continued)**

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.albertadoctors.org/news/news/statement-from-the-section-of-child-and-adolescent-psychiatry/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHLvdllleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHUcjWyXZ95f5lPDdd0xnT-q7MGsBVsT2Dz0eb1Hy\\_NWphc6MOaNRcnmWCQ\\_aem\\_7VkWZPaWDQuHpWrVgAbirg](https://www.albertadoctors.org/news/news/statement-from-the-section-of-child-and-adolescent-psychiatry/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHLvdllleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHUcjWyXZ95f5lPDdd0xnT-q7MGsBVsT2Dz0eb1Hy_NWphc6MOaNRcnmWCQ_aem_7VkWZPaWDQuHpWrVgAbirg)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> <https://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/johnstone-heres-why-albertas-sweeping-changes-to-transgender-policies-are-badly-misguided> referencing a letter from the Canadian Pediatric Society [https://cps.ca/uploads/advocacy/Gender-affirming\\_care\\_in\\_AB\\_Public.pdf](https://cps.ca/uploads/advocacy/Gender-affirming_care_in_AB_Public.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/sites/default/files/documents/Family%20Acceptance%20Project-rr%20Overview.pdf>

## Closing

We stress that it is our faith in God, our call from Jesus and the courage from the Holy Spirit that we believe empowers and demands that we cry out against these unjust laws.

We, the Northern Spirit Regional Council of The United Church of Canada, demand that you rescind Bills 26, 27, and 29.

We further request a formal and detailed response to this letter from all of its recipients.

Sincerely,

*Rev Leigh Sinclair, **Chairperson of Northern Spirit Regional Council***

*Rev Shannon McCarthy, **Executive Minister***

**Members of the Executive:**

*Jim Belliveau, Marilyn Carroll, Mervin Gallant, Gaie Goin, Donna Kline, Leslie Penny, Rev Helen Reed, Susan Silverthorne, Lorraine Stewart, Rev Paul Walfall*

**Members of the Northern Spirit Affirming Committee:**

*Mary Annan, Wilson MacLennan, Louise Rogers, Gary Simpson, Mickey Wilson, Rachel Young*