

November 20, 2025

Premier Danielle Smith
premier@gov.ab.ca
Legislature Building
Unit 307 – 10800 97th Avenue NW
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

Dear Premier Smith,

We write to you today as the Bishops of the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton and the Lutheran Synod of Alberta and the Territories and as the Moderator of the United Church of Canada. We are spiritual leaders entrusted with the care of congregations, communities, and—most importantly—people. Many of those in our care are transgender Albertans, their families, and those who love and support them.

We write this letter on the **Trans Day of Remembrance**, a day when we remember the lives of transgender people who have been lost to violence, hatred, and neglect. It is a day when communities recommit to the sacred work of protecting those most vulnerable among us. We are compelled by faith, conscience, and pastoral responsibility to speak against your government's decision to invoke the notwithstanding clause to restrict the rights and freedoms of transgender people in Alberta.

Christians believe every person is created in the image of God. This belief is lived out through justice, compassion, and the unwavering affirmation of human dignity. Policies that diminish the lives or limit the rights of transgender people stand in direct opposition to this calling.

As bishops, we also hold a particular responsibility to stand with those who are vulnerable. Transgender people—especially youth—already face disproportionate levels of discrimination, exclusion, and violence. They need allies, not additional barriers. They need care, not political maneuvers that place their safety and identity up for debate. Invoking the notwithstanding clause in this context disregards the very protections that allow marginalized people to live freely and without fear. It undermines the integrity of our social fabric and the moral commitments we share as Albertans.

Jesus consistently called his followers to protect and uplift those at risk. The Gospel compels us to ask not what is politically expedient, but what is compassionate and just. The decision to override Charter rights fails this test. It communicates to transgender youth in our province that their lives are less valued, their voices less heard, and their rights less secure.

On this Trans Day of Remembrance, as we grieve lives lost to the forces of marginalization that such policies can intensify, we urge you—and your government—to reconsider this course of action. We ask you to engage in meaningful dialogue with transgender Albertans, their families,

and the organizations who support them. We ask you to lead in a way that reflects the best of our province's values: respect for human dignity, commitment to justice, and the conviction that every person deserves to live in safety and hope.

We remain committed to walking alongside transgender people and advocating for policies that protect their rights, affirm their dignity, and support their flourishing. We pray that your government will choose a path that upholds these same principles.

Respectfully,



Bishop Trish Schermund

The Rev. Bishop Trish Schermund
Synod of Alberta and the Territories
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada



+ Stephen London

The Right Reverend Stephen London
Bishop of the Diocese of Edmonton
Anglican Church of Canada



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The Right Rev. Dr. Kimberly Heath,
Moderator of the United Church of Canada

Rev. Leigh Sinclair, Chair
Northern Spirit Regional Council
The United Church of Canada