

November 27, 2019

The Honourable Doug Schweitzer, Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
424 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue NW
Edmonton, AB
Canada T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Schweitzer,

RE: 2019 Alberta Provincial Budget – Justice and Solicitor General

Thank you for bringing a balanced voice to addressing Alberta’s economic and fiscal challenges, while remaining committed to justice as a core value of our democracy.

The YWCAs of Alberta support over 30,000 Albertans in rural and urban areas across the province. We believe in a better Alberta that removes the policy red-tape that prevents vulnerable Albertans from thriving.

We applaud the many initiatives that were included in your budget that advance important justice issues related to domestic violence, addiction, and community integration:

- Enhancing rural policing supports is key to providing vulnerable Albertans, especially women living in rural areas, access to police services that enhance their safety;
- \$50 million for the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Teams (ALERT) is essential to ensuring there is an adequate response to stalking and domestic violence cases across Alberta;
- The expansion of Drug Treatment Court and Indigenous Court is a strategic shift from a punitive approach to a restorative justice approach for Albertans who experience addiction and have perpetrated crime; and
- Increasing the number of crown prosecutors is a critical help to victims of domestic violence so they can more efficiently move through the criminal justice system and begin to rebuild their lives.

Strategic recommendations:

- Promote the creation of cross-system partnerships between police and service delivery agencies to address domestic violence (i.e. the Domestic Conflict Response Team); and
- collaborate with the YWCAs of Alberta to gain an understanding of how to more efficiently apply Victims of Crime funding for benefits and programs.

We look forward to meeting with you Minister, and your Ministry's staff to discuss our recommendations in more detail in either Calgary or Edmonton.

Sincerely,

Sue Tomney, Chief Executive Officer, YWCA Calgary
Connie MacDonald, Chief Executive Officer, YWCA Banff
Amber Niemeier, Interim Chief Executive Officer, YWCA Edmonton
Lena Neufeld, Program Director, YWCA Lethbridge