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January 13, 2022

Honorable Jason Kenney
Premier of Alberta
Office of the Premier
307 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
T5K 2B6

Dear Premier,

Re: Rural Alberta – Adolescent Vaccine Provision

Premier Kenney, since the availability of vaccines has been provided to Albertans, the message from yourself, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, and the Health Minister has remained consistent. This message has been that all eligible individuals should receive the first available vaccine, and now, this availability has extended to our youth. During the first availability of vaccine, rural Alberta felt that they were being slighted, or ignored in not having vaccine provision to those who were unable to travel, or not wanting to leave the comforts of their own community, to truly do the right thing and become vaccinated. Many across rural Alberta, Tofield included reached out to advocate and make our voices heard in having this service provided in our communities through our very capable means, such as, our pharmacies and competent pharmacists.

Bluntly, your government is ignoring rural Alberta, and creating barriers and hindrances for vaccine provision. Members of our community wanting to have their children vaccinated are being forced to drive between 50 and 70 kilometers one way to have this service provided. On top of this true inconvenience, the weather elements and poor road conditions are adding a further issue to what is already a stressful time for these parents. The decision of many is to not contend with these barriers, which is resulting in a lower vaccination rate in our rural locations.

The path forward from our vantage point appears clear, provide vaccine to our rural pharmacies to vaccinate our youth. Globally, we know that the way back to a normal life requires vaccination. In not having this ability in rural Alberta, the pandemic and its challenges to our health care system, economy and Albertans mental health will continue.

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Premier Kenney, please do not continue to ignore rural Alberta. We in the outlying centres have suffered deeply, and this stance only stands to hurt Alberta as a province on a longer-term basis. As a Council and a community, we implore your government to take a stance and advocate for change.

Sincerely,



Debora Dueck

Mayor

mayor@tofieldalberta.ca

C.C

The Honorable Jason Copping, Minister of Health
Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Damien Kurek, MP
Jackie Lovely, MLA
Alberta Municipalities
Rural Municipalities of Alberta
Darren Erickson, Tofield Pharmacy
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