



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
ALBERTA

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FEB 28 2017

TOWN OF VEGREVILLE
via email

28 February 2017

The Honourable Ahmed D. Hussen MP
365 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 1L1

Dear Minister Hussen,

First, let me congratulate you on your appointment as the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

I am writing to you about the Federal Government's proposed relocation of the Vegreville Case Processing Centre (CPC) in 2018.

This was devastating news for the town of Vegreville when it was announced last October. As a neighboring, rural riding, MLA I immediately understood the dire ramifications for Vegreville.

It is hard to fathom the reason for the proposal. By all reports CPC Vegreville is a well-functioning organisation, complemented by highly trained staff and has the appropriate existing infrastructure.

If the move had the benefit of co-locating the CPC with another part of the immigration service to improve service and reduce costs, the rationale would be clearer and perhaps provide adequate justification. This is, however, not the case.

Additionally, Minister McCallum's original statement in the House on the matter persuaded no one that a genuine business case existed.

Regretfully I must air the commonly held view that the closure has more to do with politics than with efficiency or cost saving. This proposal does nothing to dispel the attitude that Western Canada and, in particular, rural Western Canada does not rank highly in consideration by politicians in Ottawa.

The Prime Minister has done little to quell such feelings. His recent comment about "phasing out of the tar sands" merely reinforces these suspicions.

As an MLA I understand the imperatives of cost saving and creating efficiencies and I would support any well-made case that evinced these elements. To date however, these are lacking in this proposal.

I do hope that as a new incumbent to the role you are able to take an opportunity to review this proposal.

Should you be able to agree the case for closure on unambiguous grounds of cost saving and/or efficiencies, then this should be communicated to the people of Vegreville quickly and clearly.

If it cannot be demonstrated this is the case then I trust that you will act justly, wisely and in good faith to have the proposal scrapped.

I cannot emphasise the magnitude of this decision in respect of Vegreville's integrity as a town and the economic and social hardship that will surely follow from it.

I hope that by making this representation to you it will reinforce the many pleas you have received from a plethora of individuals and organisations and impress upon you the deep gravity of this decision.

Sincerely

Wes Taylor, MLA

Copy to:

**Mayor of Vegreville, Myron Hayduk.
Jessica Littlewood MLA**

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