



House of Commons
Chambre des communes

February 16, 2017

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TOWN OF VEGREVILLE

Hon. Ahmed Hussen, Minister
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister,

We write to urge you to reverse your predecessor's decision to close the Vegreville Case Processing Centre.

As you may know, the Vegreville CPC, established in 1994, is the largest and most stable employer in the Town of Vegreville. According to the latest available IRCC Performance Report for 2015-2016, the Vegreville CPC is extremely efficient - operating at 93% of new applications, and 97% of applications for extensions - well above the Department's service standard targets of 80%.

Currently, the Centre employs 236 people, and its closure will have a tremendous impact on the economy, quality of life, and viability of the Town of Vegreville. Apart from the removal of approximately 9% of the town's workforce, local unemployment could also double from 8% to 16%, not to mention the ripple effects of a devastating potential loss of 420 individuals – an erosion of the quality of life of affected families, and the permanent change in community dynamics – everything from fewer students in local schools, to fewer volunteers to serve the community.

Minister, we urge you to reconsider this closure. There has been no consultation with the Town of Vegreville before this announcement was made, and there was no assessment of the economic consequences of closing the community's largest employer. This decision is directly at odds with the federal government's campaign promise to "strengthen our communities by investing in the things that make them good places to live." In fact, the Prime Minister himself has said that "...at the same time there are communities in rural and remote areas across the country who need to continue to, to be able to be successful. So getting that balance right is really, really important . . . [it] simply means a lot more collaboration, cooperation and respect." *Maclean's Town Hall, December 16, 2015*



Minister, this decision to close the Vegreville CPC was made with no collaboration, cooperation or respect.

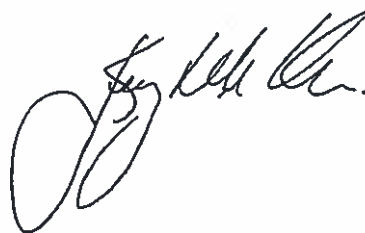
Closing a Centre that is performing well, eliminating a rural community's largest employer, and devastating the lives of hundreds of families makes no sense.

There are many voices calling for a reversal of this decision, Minister – from across all parties, and from all levels of government. We hope you will listen, and act immediately to halt the closure of the Vegreville CPC.

Sincerely,



Sheri Benson, MP
Saskatoon West
NDP Labour Critic



Jenny Kwan, MP
Vancouver East
NDP Immigration and Citizenship Critic

Copy:
Taneen Rudyk, Councillor, Town of Vegreville
Marianne Hladun, REVP, PSAC Prairie Region
Shannon Stubbs, MP Lakeland
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