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For Immediate Release

Vegreville fallout: Canadian municipalities seek transparency in federal office closures

Vegreville – Elected municipal officials from across the country voted overwhelmingly in favour of a resolution requiring the federal government to present a clear business case and consult impacted communities before closing federal facilities.

“Federal offices offer good stable jobs that strengthen the foundation of the communities that host them,” said Ray Orb, who chairs the Rural Forum of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). “With this motion, FCM members are supporting local governments’ need for transparency and predictability as they build their local economies and a better Canada.”

The Town of Vegreville’s resolution was debated at FCM’s annual general meeting, which drew more than 2,000 municipal leaders to Ottawa earlier this month. The resolution came in response to the federal decision to close the Vegreville Case Processing Centre (CPC)—the Town’s largest employer—eliminating hundreds of local jobs, and moving up to 280 jobs to Edmonton.

“The criteria provided to the Town by the federal government for the closure would make it impossible for any community to host a federal facility,” said Vegreville Mayor Myron Hayduk. “The government made this decision without any public business case, no clear benefits, and no consultation. We want to make sure no other community has to endure this same painful process.”

The Town of Vegreville will also be following up with the Prime Minister’s office on his recent public comments that the federal government is working closely with the community.

“If the federal government has a plan to address the impacts to our community, I look forward to hearing more from the Prime Minister,” added Mayor Hayduk. “But local needs also have to be considered before facilities are closed, and that is why our resolution at FCM was so important. Unless the government changes how it makes these decisions, what happened to Vegreville can happen to any community.”

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