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June 23, 2025

The Honourable David McGuinty, P.C., M.P.
Minister of National Defence
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
david.mcguinty@parl.gc.ca

Dear Minister McGuinty,

Subject: Congratulations on Your Appointment and the Strategic Importance of CFB Suffield and DRDC to Southeast Alberta

On behalf of the Southeast Alberta Chamber of Commerce, we extend our sincere congratulations on your recent appointment as Canada's Minister of National Defence. Your extensive experience in national security and intelligence, including your leadership of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, brings a wealth of insight to this critical portfolio.

As you begin your mandate, we wish to highlight the strategic and economic significance of Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Suffield and the Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) Suffield Research Centre, both located in Southeast Alberta. These institutions are vital to Canada's defence readiness and innovation capacity and serve as foundational pillars of our regional economy.

In addition, Southeast Alberta is emerging as a hub for aerospace and drone technology, with growing interest in the development and testing of unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and dual-use defence technologies. The region's expansive geography, low population density, and proximity to DRDC, as well as the Foremost UAS Test Range—Canada's first and largest beyond-visual-line-of-sight (BVLOS) approved airspace for unmanned aerial systems, are unique assets to Canada with strong potential for defence, commercial, and emergency response applications.

Our goal would be to have the Government recognize these unique assets and prioritize:

- **Sustained Investment in CFB Suffield and DRDC Suffield:** offering continued support for advanced research in chemical, biological, radiological, and explosive (CBRE) defence, and the integration of emerging technologies into national security applications, while ensuring long-term stability and infrastructure investment to support military training operations, including the British Army Training Unit Suffield (BATUS) and NATO exercises.
- **Support for Aerospace and Drone Innovation:** exploring opportunities to expand defence-related aerospace research and testing in Southeast Alberta, including partnerships with local innovators and academic institutions.

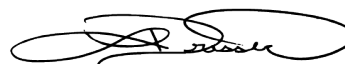
We believe that CFB Suffield, DRDC, and the region's growing aerospace capabilities represent a unique national asset. We are eager to work with your office to ensure their continued success and integration into Canada's broader defence and innovation strategies. We hope we can further illustrate the economic impact that the base, research centre, and emerging aerospace sector have as major contributors to the economic vitality of Southeast Alberta and to Canada. If there is interest in greater collaboration between National Defence, the private sector, and post-secondary institutions to foster dual-use technology development and commercialization, we would be pleased to organize a roundtable discussion to include key industry partners, private sector businesses, post-secondary institutions and economic development organizations. Please let us know your availability, as we would be happy to accommodate your schedule to meet with you either virtually or in person.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to your response and to working together to support Canada's defence and research excellence.

Sincerely,



Steven Pudwell
2024-2025 President, Board of Directors



Lisa Dressler
Executive Director

cc: MP Glen Motz, Medicine Hat-Cardston-Warner Constituency
Cc: MP David Bexte, Bow River Constituency