



November 26, 2019

Honourable Jason Kenny  
Premier. President of Executive Council  
Office of the Premier  
Executive Branch  
307 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Email: [premier@gov.ab.ca](mailto:premier@gov.ab.ca)

Dear Honourable Jason Kenney,

**RE: Concerns Regarding Funding Cuts to Civil Society**

The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) and the Federation of Calgary Communities (The Federation) jointly are concerned about cuts to programs like the Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP). The Government of Alberta is a critical funding source to nonprofit organizations. We are also very concerned about the unclear and potentially unintended consequences to civil society upon the enactment of Bill 20, the Fiscal Measures and Taxation Act. We are concerned specifically about the elimination of the Alberta Lottery Fund.

The EFCL and The Federation, are member-based organizations who advocate for more than 380 non-profits, 321 of which are community leagues or associations located in Edmonton and Calgary.

Community leagues/associations in Alberta offer a unique community-based model for resident-led programming and social infrastructure. These are volunteer led and operated organizations. Our volunteers build, manage, and lifecycle more than \$750 million dollars in community amenities between our cities that require support to maintain their service to community. This is a conservative estimate. These amenities support activities that provide

Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues  
7103 105 Street NW  
Edmonton, AB T6E 4G8

Federation of Calgary Communities  
110 720 28<sup>th</sup> Street NE  
Calgary, AB T2A 6R3

local recreational opportunities, reduce isolation, and create a sense of belonging for residents at a neighbourhood level.

The Province of Alberta, through a variety of funding streams and through the Alberta Lottery Fund, has been an essential form of “matching” funding for our members. By utilizing public funds, like the CFEP, our member organizations, at last count, have built and currently operate the following:

<b>Edmonton Community Leagues</b>	<b>Calgary Community Associations</b>
126 Community League halls	102 Community Association halls
250 Playgrounds	201 Playgrounds
119 Outdoor Community Ice Rinks	91 Outdoor Community Ice Rinks/ 12 Indoor Rinks
55 Water Spray Parks	6 Outdoor Pools
46 Basketball Court Facilities	37 Sports Courts
25 Community Gardens	42 Community Gardens
24 Outdoor Tennis Court Facilities	89 Sports or Playfields
10 BMX/Skateboard Tracks	

The introduction of Bill 20: Fiscal Measures and Taxation Act 2019 (Bill 20), will effectively eliminate the Alberta Lottery Fund, and could redirect existing and future funds currently invested in this area to general revenue. We recognize this government is committed to transparency, and we believe this action goes against that value. In addition to the decrease in CFEP funding from \$38 million to \$25 million (representing a 34 per cent reduction), our organizations and members have grave concerns regarding future allocations to this program.

With aging vital infrastructure to maintain, our members rely on CFEP (and other provincial resources like AGLC Casino Funds) to build and lifecycle the amenities listed above. Moreover, the reduction in CFEP funding will adversely affect our members’ ability to access other limited sources of funding, as it is a critical source for matching funds used to leverage other grant programming critical to the needs of community maintenance and building. Cuts to CFEP will mean a decrease in our ability to leverage other resources, and will ultimately lead to a cascading inability to secure needed funding. Additionally, land agreements with the respective municipalities (based on the Municipal Government Act) restrict our members from engaging in a variety of fundraising or sponsorship activities. CFEP is an essential source of funds to sustain and revitalize our communities.

The introduction of Bill 20 in its current form and cuts to significant grant programs like CFEP threaten not only community-based facilities but also the programs and events they house and

the collective community way of life. The ripple effect will affect the lives of Albertans. For example, without the ability to maintain community halls, our members will not be able to host programs and activities for all ages. Existing facilities and amenities, in need of renovations to ensure accessibility and lifecycling, will remain inaccessible to community members and will fall into disrepair and become unsafe. Communities will certainly lose amenities which will have a direct impact on Albertans' quality of life. We believe that there is a real and imminent danger that some of our community leagues and associations may need to cease operations as they will lack the funds to make critical investments in infrastructure, leaving citizens without playgrounds, ice rinks, community gardens and buildings in which to participate in activities.

Our members depend on CFEP funding for the ongoing repairs and renovations needed to ensure that these neighbourhood amenities provide vibrant and safe places for neighbours to gather.

Alberta needs community more than ever to connect people and ideas. We know that social isolation is damaging to health, education, business and society - something both of our organizations and their membership have understood and addressed for close to 100 years. These cuts to civil society funding will have a significant impact on the well-being of Albertans.

On behalf of the 321 community leagues/associations we represent, we urgently request a meeting with you at your earliest convenience. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Ryan E. Barber  
President, EFCL



Valerie Mushinski  
President, Federation



Laura Cunningham-Shpeley  
Executive Director, EFCL



Leslie Evans  
Executive Director, Federation

Enclosures

CC: All MLAs  
Edmonton Community Leagues Presidents  
Calgary Community Associations Presidents

### More about our organizations:



The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) supports and advocates for the interests of our 160 Community Leagues (community-based independent organizations) across the City of Edmonton. We are a nearly 100-year-old organization that has built incredible community gathering spaces and recreational amenities that have a tremendous impact on community health, local business and the economy. In short, our organization is representative of all Edmontonians who live, work and play in each and every one of our communities.



The Federation of Calgary Communities (The Federation) is a member-based support organization for over 220 not-for-profits in Calgary, including the 152 community associations in Calgary. We work to support board members and volunteers who improve neighbourhood life in Calgary by providing programs and services that help them build their organization's capacity to support and mobilize residents, and to be on the front lines of important issues affecting their community.

We are a recognized voice for community and advocate for small non-profits who improve neighbourhood life in Calgary. Along with our city's community associations we make up the largest collective volunteer movement in Calgary, with more than 20,000 volunteers strong!