



January 18, 2017

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Hussen,

Congratulations on your recent appointment. We are very excited to start the new year with a new Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship and look forward to the fresh approach you will undoubtedly bring to the position.

As you acquaint yourself with the standing portfolios and ongoing issues that you are responsible for, I would like to bring one important and urgent issue to your attention.

On October 27, 2016, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada employees at the Vegreville Case Processing Centre were shocked to learn that the federal government plans to close the processing centre in Vegreville and relocate it to Edmonton. Approximately 280 employees work in the centre and represent approximately five percent of the population of Vegreville.

I have attached our previous correspondence with Mr. McCallum for background information and context. PSAC National President Robyn Benson first wrote to Mr. McCallum asking him to halt the plan to move the Immigration Centre from Vegreville. She received a response from Mr. McCallum citing financial savings and maintenance issues as reasons for the relocation. Another letter was sent to Mr. McCallum providing him with further information and refuting some of the erroneous claims.

Additionally, I sent an e-mail to Mr. McCallum inviting him to attend the community forum we held at the Vegreville Social Centre. Ultimately, more than 400 people attended to show their support and voice their concerns. However, Mr. McCallum was not one of them. He responded to my invitation sending his regrets for not attending the forum. He also invited me to contact his office to discuss the relocation further.



It is disappointing that no consideration was given to the exemplary work done by the employees and the devastating impact on the community of Vegreville. We have received many emails from worried members and citizens wondering what the closure will mean for their families and their community and I spoke with many personally at the community forum held in December.

I would ask that you review the materials attached, and make every effort to visit Vegreville to tour the workplace and the community, and to meet with me and the affected employees. I'm confident that after a review of the issue, you will understand why the entire community has rallied behind this cause and will be prepared to invest in rural Alberta by reversing the planned closure.

If you are not able to visit Vegreville, we can meet with you in Ottawa to discuss our concerns and come up with a solution that will meet the government's goals in a way that will also benefit the workers and the community. Either way, please advise of your availability for a meeting in the very near future.

For more information on the work that is being done to stop the closure, visit www.respectvegreville.ca. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office at 204-956-4625. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Hladun', is positioned above the typed name.

Marianne Hladun
Regional Executive Vice-President
Public Service Alliance of Canada, Prairies

c.c: Robyn Benson, PSAC National President
Chris Aylward, PSAC National Executive Vice-President

Attachments:

- November 2, 2016 letter
- November 30, 2016 letter
- December 23, 2016 letter
- December 9, 2016 e-mail
- December 19, 2016 letter