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December 16, 2019

VIA EMAIL: [marc.garneau@parl.gc.ca](mailto:marc.garneau@parl.gc.ca)

**The Honourable Marc Garneau**

Minister of Transport  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

To The Honourable Marc Garneau:

**Re: Ministerial Mandate Letter**

Egale Canada would like to extend our sincere congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Transport. We believe that this Ministry has tremendous potential to positively impact the LGBTQI2S community in Canada.

Egale Canada is the only national LGBTQI2S organization in Canada. We work to improve the lives of LGBTQI2S persons and to enhance the global response to LGBTQI2S issues by informing public policy, inspiring cultural change, and promoting human rights and inclusion through research, education, and community engagement.

We are encouraged by this Government's commitment to work with the LGBTQI2S community. As I am sure you are aware, in November 2017, the Prime Minister formally apologized for nearly four decades of "systemic oppression, criminalization, and violence"<sup>1</sup> against the LGBTQI2S community in Canada. During this apology, we were relieved to hear that the Prime Minister understands that "there is still much work to do"<sup>2</sup> to eradicate LGBTQI2S discrimination in Canada.

We applaud the Prime Minister's decision to disclose *mandate letters* to the public. We agree that by doing so, this Government has taken steps to ensure "the most open and accessible government possible."<sup>3</sup> We have read your *mandate letter* and are encouraged by the following priorities that have been identified by the Prime Minister:

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<sup>1</sup> Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, "Remarks by Prime Minister Trudeau to apologize to LGBTQ2 Canadians", 28 November 2017, online: Government of Canada <<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/speeches/2017/11/28/remarks-prime-minister-justin-trudeau-apologize-lgbtq2-canadians>>.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, "Prime Minister releases new ministerial mandate letters", 28 August 2018, online: Government of Canada <<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2018/08/28/prime-minister-releases-new-ministerial-mandate-letters>>.



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- i. Continue the implementation of the Transportation 2030 strategic plan:  
[...]
  - o Implement measures to strengthen the transparency, accountability and efficiency of Canadian airports;

We are mindful of the fact that the *Canadian Air Transport Security Authority* has implemented a policy regarding the security screening process for transgender travellers.<sup>4</sup> But we are concerned that such a policy is rendered meaningless if those persons tasked with enforcing its provisions are not provided with adequate and comprehensive training to ensure the intended effect of the policy.

The importance of treating travellers with respect and dignity is something that you have personally addressed during your time as Minister of Transport. For example, in August 2018, an employee at WestJet outed a transgender passenger. An investigation was launched by your Ministry, and a statement was prepared by a member of your staff:

Canadians are proud of our country's diversity and inclusion. Minister [Marc] Garneau strongly believes that all passengers must feel safe to be themselves when travelling and is very upset about this incident.<sup>5</sup>

We strongly encourage the Ministry of Transport to develop mandatory cultural competency training for airport staff to ensure that they can competently engage with LGBTQI2S travellers. We believe this training should be included in the *Transportation 2030* strategic plan in order to ensure that all passengers can feel safe while traveling in Canada.

Egale Canada has developed an expertise on LGBTQI2S issues. Since our inception in 1986, we have intervened in 13 applications before the Supreme Court of Canada and more than 25 equality-seeking legal proceedings in lower courts across the provinces and territories.

We believe strongly in equality and inclusivity for all Canadians, and would kindly request to be consulted on the LGBTQI2S issues that fall within your mandate as Minister of Transport. **Please take this letter as a formal request for a meeting with you, and members**

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<sup>4</sup> Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, "Transgender Passengers", 28 September 2016, online: CATSA <<https://www.catsa-acsta.gc.ca/en/transgender-passengers>>.

<sup>5</sup> Sarah Rieger, "Ministry contacting WestJet over outing a transgender passenger", CBC, 16 August 2018, online: CBC <<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/westjet-transgender-outing-1.4788279>>.



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of your Ministry, to discuss Egale Canada's National Action Plan for a more LGBTQI2S inclusive Canada.

We hope to work closely with you, and your Ministry, on the issues that matter deeply to us all.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Helen Kennedy'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'H' being particularly large and stylized.

Helen Kennedy  
Executive Director  
Egale Canada