



Open Letter: Egale Canada calls on the CRTC to Hold a Public Consultation on the Broadcasting of the American Fox News Channel in Canada

April 4th, 2023

To Vicky Eatrides, Chairperson and CEO of the CRTC:

Last week, Egale Canada and a prominent Canadian leader for trans rights and inclusion were featured on the infamously incendiary Tucker Carlson Tonight program on the American Fox News Channel. The coverage aimed to provoke hatred and violence against 2SLGBTQI communities, particularly those who are Two Spirit, trans, nonbinary and gender non-conforming (2STNBGN).

This programming is in clear violation of Canadian broadcasting standards and has no place on Canadian broadcasting networks. Carlson made false and horrifying claims about 2STNBGN people, painting them as violent and dangerous. During the segment, Carlson made the inflammatory and false claim that trans people are "targeting" Christians. To position trans people in existential opposition to Christianity is an incitement of violence against trans people that is plain to any viewer. The segment also contained a range of other malicious misinformation about 2STNBGN people, including that trans people are given preferential treatment in employment and other opportunities. This is clearly an attempt to stoke resentment against 2STNBGN people.

Furthermore, Egale's name and logo were used in connection with our recent [open letter](#) which noted "an exponential rise in anti-2SLGBTQI, hate-fueled movements and protests". Carlson stated, "This is a lie," calling into question Egale's credibility. Lies and hateful propaganda are not news programming.

The List of non-Canadian programming services and stations authorized for distribution in Canada (the List) is administered by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). The CRTC is responsible for all aspects of the Canadian broadcasting system, including ensuring that it serves the public interest. Though the CRTC does not issue licenses to non-Canadian broadcasters, it has

established that non-Canadian broadcasters must be held to the same standard as Canadian channels.

Specifically, Canadian broadcasters can be fined or even lose their licenses for broadcasting “any **abusive comment** or abusive pictorial representation that, when taken in context, **tends to or is likely to expose an individual or a group or class of individuals to hatred or contempt** on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, **sex, sexual orientation**, age or mental or physical disability” (*Television Broadcasting Regulations*, section 5(b); emphasis added).

Egale has experienced firsthand the hate that is generated from a single segment aired on Fox News in Canada. We cannot begin to imagine the broader impacts and potential rise in hate that might result from allowing more content like this to air in Canada. The CRTC is obligated to investigate whether the continued broadcasting of Fox News on Canadian television is in line with the *Television Broadcasting Regulations*. People in Canada deserve to know that the news broadcast on Canadian airwaves is reliable and objective, and marginalized groups must be protected from malicious propaganda.

According to section 18(3) of the *Broadcasting Act*, the CRTC “may hold a public hearing, make a report, issue any decision and give any approval in connection with any complaint or representation made to the Commission or with any other matter within its jurisdiction under this Act if it is satisfied that it would be in the public interest to do so.” The public interest clearly demands a consultation on the appropriateness of the continued inclusion of Fox News on the List.

Given the rising levels of anti-trans hate around the world and the potential for segments like the one recently aired on Fox News, there needs to be a serious Canadian conversation about the broadcasting of Fox News in Canada. The *Television Broadcasting Regulations* represent a democratic consensus on what we do and do not accept on our airwaves, and we have agreed that we do not tolerate abuse and misinformation. Fox News must be held to these same standards in Canadian broadcasting. We are calling on the CRTC to begin public consultations on the removal of Fox News from the List of non-Canadian programming authorized for distribution in Canada.

Sincerely,



Helen Kennedy
Executive Director
Egale Canada