

Minister of Health



Ministre de la Santé

AUG 18 2016

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K9

Mr. Doug Auld
Chair
Wellington Dufferin Guelph Board of Health
Sylvia.Muir@wdgpublichealth.ca

Dear Mr. Auld:

I am writing in response to your correspondence of June 1, 2016, concerning the legalization of marijuana in Canada, which was forwarded to me on July 13, 2016, by the Office of the Prime Minister.

I always appreciate hearing the thoughts of Canadians, as it helps me to better represent their interests as Minister of Health.

As you are aware, the Government of Canada is committed to legalizing, strictly regulating, and restricting access to marijuana to keep it from children, and to keep profits from criminals.

On June 30, 2016, the Government of Canada launched the Task Force on Marijuana Legalization and Regulation to consider key aspects of this commitment, and to report to the Government with its advice on the design of a new system that legalizes, strictly regulates, and restricts access to marijuana. The work of the Task Force, including consultations, will be guided by a discussion paper available to the public.

I have shared your comments with the Task Force for their consideration. Should you wish to learn more about this initiative and provide further comments, please visit <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/health-system-systeme-sante/consultations/legalization-marijuana-legalisation/index-eng.php>, where you can find a link to the discussion paper and participate in an online consultation until August 29, 2016.

Please note that the Government will not decriminalize marijuana prior to legalizing and regulating it. Decriminalizing possession of marijuana without ensuring that controls are in place for its access would be giving the green light to dealers and criminal organizations to sell unregulated marijuana to anyone, including our children and youth.

Legalizing, strictly regulating and restricting access to marijuana is a serious, complex matter, and we are committed to a thoughtful, transparent and evidence-based process.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write about this important issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Philpott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Honourable Jane Philpott, P.C., M.P.

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