



## PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE & DISTRICT CHAMBER

### **The Honourable Mark Carney**

Prime Minister of Canada  
Office of the Premier  
Ottawa, ON

### **The Honourable Sean Fraser**

Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON

June 23, 2025

Dear Prime Minister Carney and Minister Fraser,

On behalf of the Portage la Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce and our network of local businesses, organizations, and community leaders, we are writing to express our serious concern regarding the state of Canada's bail system and the urgent need for a comprehensive overhaul of our justice system.

Safe, secure communities are the foundation of a healthy economy. However, our members are increasingly impacted by a justice system that allows repeat offenders to be released on bail, often with little to no meaningful oversight. These individuals frequently reoffend, creating an environment of fear, instability, and financial strain on businesses and the community as a whole.

This is not just a public safety issue — it is a significant and growing economic burden. Businesses are being forced to absorb a range of unplanned costs:

- **Increased security measures**, including alarm systems, surveillance, and private security services.
- **Lost productivity** and absenteeism as employees express fear about coming to work, especially during early morning or late evening hours.
- **Higher insurance premiums** due to theft, vandalism, and repeated claims.

- **Additional investments in Employee Family Assistance Programs (EFAPs)** to support staff impacted by trauma, anxiety, and workplace-related stress stemming from safety concerns.
- **Rising mental health challenges** that increase strain not only on employers, but on our already overstretched public health and medical systems.

The current approach is simply not sustainable — neither socially nor economically.

We are calling on your government to take immediate action to:

1. **Reform Canada’s bail system**, especially in cases involving violent or repeat offenders, to prioritize community safety.
2. **Hold the justice system accountable**, ensuring that decisions reflect the realities facing our communities and do not enable ongoing harm.
3. **Strengthen supports for frontline services**, including police, prosecutors, and community-based organizations, so they can respond effectively and consistently.
4. **Invest in long-term preventative solutions**, including mental health care, addictions treatment, and housing supports, to address the systemic issues that contribute to crime.

We understand that justice reform is complex. However, inaction is costing Canadian communities and businesses more every day — in both dollars and lives. Our Chamber urges your leadership to restore confidence in our justice system and take the steps necessary to protect the well-being of citizens, employees, and employers alike.

We are committed to working collaboratively with all levels of government to advocate for fair, effective, and community-focused solutions. The time for meaningful change is now.

Sincerely,

**Stefanie Dunn**

Executive Director

Portage la Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce