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April 14, 2025

Leaders' Debates Commission

By e-mail: info@debates-debats.ca

Subject: Urgent Request: Health Debate

Dear Members of the Leaders' Debates Commission,

On behalf of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU), representing 250,000 frontline nurses and nursing students across the country, we are writing to express our disappointment and outrage that health care has been excluded from the upcoming federal leaders' debate.

Canada's nurses are struggling. Four out of 10 nurses plan to leave their profession. There are almost 40,000 vacant nursing positions in Canada. ERs are being closed every day, and 6.5 million Canadians are without a primary care provider. These are facts that demand solutions and ignoring them during the federal leaders' debates is a profound disservice to the public, let alone to the health care workers, who support your loved ones throughout their lives.


Recent polling shows that health care is now tied with tariffs as the top issue on the minds of voters. That's no coincidence. Canadians are witnessing the steady creep of U.S.-style privatization into our system – and they are worried. They are worried about whether they'll be able to access care when they need it, about whether they'll have to pay out of pocket, and about whether their kids will grow up with the same protections they once took for granted.

By leaving health care off the debate agenda, the Commission is shielding those leaders from the accountability voters expect. It sends the message that health care doesn't matter – that it's not worth debating. That is both unacceptable and dangerous.

If the leaders' debate is to have any relevance or credibility, it must reflect the priorities of the public. Health care is at the top of that list. A national debate that ignores the very system Canadians are most proud of – and most concerned about – is not serving the public interest. It is failing it.

We urge you in the strongest possible terms to reverse this decision and ensure that health care is included in the leaders' debate. Canadians deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,



Linda Silas, President
Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions



Angela Preocanin, Secretary-Treasurer
Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions



Barbara Brookins, President
Prince Edward Island Nurses' Union



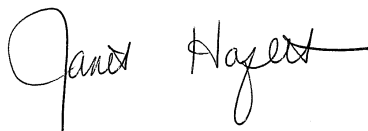
Erin Ariss, President
Ontario Nurses' Association



Yvette Coffey, President
Registered Nurses' Union
Newfoundland & Labrador



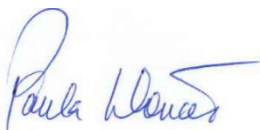
Darlene Jackson, President
Manitoba Nurses Union



Janet Hazelton, President
Nova Scotia Nurses' Union



Tracy Zambory, President
Saskatchewan Union of Nurses



Paula Doucet, President
New Brunswick Nurses Union



Heather Smith, President
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Adriane Gear, President
British Columbia Nurses' Union



Opeyemi Kehinde, President
Canadian Nursing Students's Association