



MEDIA RELEASE

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RMA Encourages Prime Minister to Engage Rural Representatives in Alberta and Saskatchewan

To support national unity, a well-represented voice must include the rural perspective

Nisku, AB, October 24, 2019 – In response to the results of the federal election, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has expressed the need to work to earn the trust of people in Alberta and Saskatchewan, as two resource-rich provinces. The Prime Minister has reached out to the premiers of Alberta and Saskatchewan, as well as the mayors of Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, and Saskatoon in this regard.

As the voice of rural Alberta, the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) reminds the Prime Minister that Alberta and Saskatchewan are much bigger than just the provinces' large urban centres and that rural engagement is paramount in strengthening unity across the country. Rural areas are home to key industries – from agriculture and natural resources to tourism and renewable energy – and these industries are essential in driving the economy, including in Canada's major cities. As such, the rural associations in both Alberta and Saskatchewan need to be included in discussions to create solutions to the divisive situation that has been building.

Priorities in rural Alberta include investment in road and bridge infrastructure to support the movement of goods and services, getting energy products to market, and policy programs to help drive the agriculture economy. Rural municipalities are stewards of the environment and recognize the risks of climate change; policy and programs must be designed to include a rural perspective and allow for developing climate resiliency in rural infrastructure such as roads and bridges.

The RMA is an active member of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and supports the FCM call for federal parties to build a "rural lens" into the heart of the federal government – bringing rural realities to the table, and modernizing federal tools to empower rural leaders to build better lives that enhance both rural and urban areas. Rural Forum is the largest caucus group in the FCM Board and Committee structure, demonstrating the need for the federal government to engage the rural voice.

In the interest of national unity, mutual benefit means having a well-represented voice. The RMA and the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) can provide that voice. We strongly encourage the Prime Minister to connect with the RMA and SARM to understand priorities of the rural western provinces.

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Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) is an independent association comprising Alberta's 69 counties and municipal districts. Since 1909, we have helped rural municipalities achieve strong, effective local government. RMA provides Advocacy and Business Services (including RMA Trade, RMA Fuel and RMA Insurance).

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