

University of
Lethbridge



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April 29, 2020

Buffalo Project
PO Box 2554 Stn M
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Sent by email: Derek Robinson (Advisor to the Buffalo Project) derek@mashmedia.ca

Dear Buffalo Project Advisory Board Members,

Thank you for your letter of April 16, 2020 regarding a letter signed by 265 faculty members across the country that collectively expresses the view that the federal government should not provide financial assistance to Alberta's oil industry. I can confirm this is the position of the signatories and not the University of Lethbridge.

The economic downturn in Alberta's economy, as well its oil and gas sector, is a significant concern of ours for many reasons. Close to home, it is a significant factor that has led to historic funding reductions to Alberta's post-secondary sector. Combined with the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, our university has been forced to decrease its workforce and eliminate programs. The downturn on our economy is decreasing work-integrated learning opportunities (co-ops, internships, and practicums) and our graduates (many of whom work in the oil and gas sector) have fewer employment opportunities than before. I can also share we are extremely concerned about our donors' ability to support important initiatives and how that, coupled with decreasing public resources, will compromise Alberta's post-secondary ability to compete with institutions in other jurisdictions.

I have examined the letter closely and have taken the time to understand your concerns. First, I appreciate your statement that the Buffalo Project supports academic freedom and principles of free thought. These are important values of ours as well.

The letter in question does not indicate this is a position of the University of Lethbridge, and I believe that in identifying the areas of their expertise, the faculty who have signed

the letter allow readers to judge for themselves the merit of the content and the weight their respective signatures deserve.

As Alberta recovers from this economic downturn, and as we resume normal activities post-COVID-19, the University is ready to play a critical role in the recovery of our province. We know our teaching, research and community outreach activities are critical components in ensuring a strong and diversified economy for the benefit of the people of our Province. We will continue to work with our many stakeholders, including those in Alberta's energy industry, to help ensure a secure economic future for all of the communities we serve in Alberta and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Mahon', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael J. Mahon
President & Vice-Chancellor

cc. Mr. Kurt Schlachter, Board Chair
Dr. Erasmus Okine, Interim Provost & Vice-President, Academic