

November 1, 2021

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

**Re: Appointing a Parliamentary Secretary on Water**

Dear Prime Minister:

There is a tremendous opportunity before you. As your government embarks on your third mandate, there has never been more to gain from establishing Canada as a world leader in freshwater security and sustainability; conversely, there has never been more to lose from inaction.

During this past election, your party put forward the most robust federal freshwater platform in recent memory. We now encourage you to ensure that you have the resources and leadership in place to deliver on these promises. Over the past two years, the water community benefited immensely from a strong working relationship with Mr. Terry Duguid, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (Canada Water Agency). To maintain momentum on the Canada Water Agency and to meet your other important water commitments, we strongly recommend that you expand this role by appointing a Parliamentary Secretary on Water to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. This new position, if adequately resourced with budget and staff, would help build linkages between climate and water policy, ensure continuity with the water community, advance interdepartmental coordination on your freshwater commitments, and establish Canada as a world leader on freshwater security and sustainability.

This past year has starkly demonstrated the high cost of climate-related water extremes. Droughts, floods, and wildfires touched nearly every corner of the country, while water quality challenges – most recently in Iqaluit – compromise the safety of drinking water and enjoyment of recreational waters for millions of Canadians. Notably, western Canada is being hit harder than anywhere else in the country at a time that western alienation is rising. 2020 also marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Canada Water Act, an outdated piece of legislation that your government has committed to modernizing. A modernized legislative framework is a critical step, as are your commitments to a Freshwater Action Plan, Canada Water Agency, and freshwater research.

Moving forward, several important water milestones will be observed in 2022. Next year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Canada-US Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, an agreement signed by your father, as well as the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mackenzie River Basin Transboundary Waters Master Agreement. On the international stage, we are nearing the midway point of the UN's Water Action Decade (2018-2028) and, for the first time ever, the COP26 Summit features a Water & Climate Pavilion. These developments demonstrate the international community's recognition of the key linkages between water and climate change. They also highlight an opportunity for Canada to establish itself as an international leader on freshwater security and sustainability.

Prime Minister Trudeau, we commend you on your commitment to protecting Canada's freshwater.

Bringing your freshwater platform commitments to life during your current mandate will help achieve this goal. But there is a lot of work to do. Appointing a Parliamentary Secretary on Water to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change with adequate resourcing will help ensure that this work gets done right. As always, we stand ready to assist your government with your efforts to ensure freshwater security and sustainability at home and abroad.

Sincerely,  
*List of signatories below*

cc. The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, P.C., M.P.  
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**Signatories:**



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