



November 7, 2019

Jason Kenney, premier
307 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Premier Kenney;

On behalf of the Canadian Historical Association, the professional body representing 900 historians employed in universities, government, and private practice in Canada, I am writing to express the concern of the Canadian Historical Association about the recent closure of the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation and the cutting of the heritage budget of 8 percent.

The elimination of the thirteen-member board of experts means that your government is losing the expert knowledge of the leaders of the heritage community. The board brings expertise and a variety of diverse lenses to questions of heritage commemoration and research that cannot be replicated within the public service.

The programs that the board administered are vital to the culture of Alberta. The board administers funds that support investments in museums, heritage management plans, heritage buildings, historical research and student scholarships. These programs are integral to protecting the material and memorial history of Alberta. Cutting them means that some historic sites will be torn down or will deteriorate, some valuable artifacts that should be returned to Alberta will be lost to other museums, irreplaceable oral history opportunities will disappear and opportunities for learning about the past will be lost. History and historical memory is the glue that holds our societies together.

The funds your government has spent on heritage though the Foundation have been among the best investments Alberta has made since 1973. Many of the grants the Foundation administers provide funds that actually double the government's own investments through matching funds. In those cases, a cut of 8% is a loss of 16% flowing into the heritage sector. Heritage investments also fuel the tourism economy.

Canadian Historical Association | Société historique du Canada
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On behalf of the Canadian Historical Association I urge you to reconsider both the abolition of the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation and the budget cuts imposed on the programs transferred to the department of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women.

Sincerely,



P. E. Bryden

President, Canadian Historical Association

Présidente, Société historique du Canada

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