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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
ALBERTA

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**David Swann, MD**

M.L.A. CALGARY MOUNTAIN VIEW  
LEADER, OFFICIAL OPPOSITION OF ALBERTA

Premier Ed Stelmach  
307 Legislature Building  
10800 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

July 29, 2010

Dear Premier Stelmach,

I'm currently examining the flood damage here in Medicine Hat and Irvine. I have spent the last couple of days speaking to citizens here about their government's response to the flood disaster that has ruined their personal property, disrupted their routines, and in the worst cases, put them out of their homes and drained their savings.

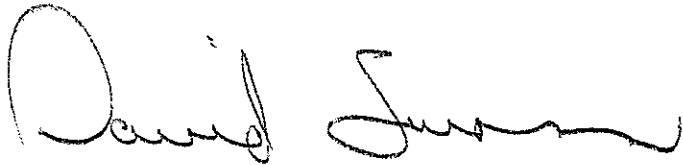
Premier, the people of Medicine Hat and Irvine have explained to me at length the depths of their frustration, disappointment and even anger at your administration's inadequate response to this disaster. They need your help, and so far they're getting the runaround from your bureaucracy, forced to deal with a distant call centre in Lethbridge when help is urgently needed on the scene in the flood-damaged communities.

It's been a month since the initial flood, and Albertans are still waiting for assistance. One senior citizen I spoke with has lost everything; she has no home, there's no money left, and she doesn't know how she'll care for her aging husband. She showed me a photograph of the water still surrounding her home – a home she's worried she'll never return to. The pain and frustration in her eyes is hard to watch, especially when she says she's received the standard bureaucratic response from your government – no compassion, no kindness, but most importantly, no help.

Premier, these people feel that you've forgotten the role of government: to take care of people in distress. A representative of the Red Cross said it looked like a tsunami had hit Medicine Hat, and from everything I've heard, only the city government's response prevented more extensive damage. In contrast, the provincial government's response – or lack of response – has been shockingly callous and inept. If I were in your position, I would have ensured that on-site assistance was immediately on the scene in Medicine Hat and Irvine, to provide financial, material and emotional support for flood victims. That's what a responsible government would do.

Winter is coming. These people want to be back in their homes, back on their feet, before it comes. It's time to act. I urge you to really listen to the concerns and address the urgent needs of the flood victims. Listen to people like Patty and Jerry Swanson. Or Murray Heisler. Or Cheryl Finnie, James Chatfield, Geoff Watson, Joanne Spinks, and so many others. And once you've listened, send real help. It's not too late to make a difference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Swann". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Swann, MD  
Leader of the Official Opposition