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The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, PC, MP
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister:

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. Thank you for all that our government is doing to help Canadians get through this difficult time. It is an enormous task and the collective response we have witnessed from Canadians to date, has been tremendous.

On behalf of The Royal Canadian Legion, I was pleased to hear of the new Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF) announced on April 21. However, we are becoming increasingly concerned about the lack of detail on how this fund will be managed. We ask that the process and eligibility criteria be forthcoming without further delay, in order to transfer additional help to our Branches as quickly as we can.

Many of our Branches require funds to operate their facilities and kitchens in order to make and provide food to help those in need in their communities. We expect the ECSF will help them in this regard, but we have not seen any details to confirm it. As a not-for-profit organization with primarily volunteer staff, it appears many Branches are not eligible for the previously announced CEBA, CEWS or the 10% temporary wage subsidy.

We do support the process whereby the ECSF will be distributed to national organizations for local use. As time is of the essence, we agree this is the most efficient method and we stand ready to take on an intermediary role.

Within the Legion, I have witnessed and learned of countless heartfelt initiatives to help our Veterans and Communities weather this storm. They have come up with creative ways to make and deliver food and medical supplies, they are calling senior citizens to check on their well-being, making lunches for students, and helping people donate blood, among other actions.

As you may know, close to 1,400 Branches operate with revenue generated from events and building rentals – all of which have been cancelled indefinitely. The emergency fund you have announced will hopefully provide additional needed support to help them stay alive and provide the vital services our Veterans and communities will continue to require both now and in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Irvine', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Thomas D. Irvine, CD
Dominion President