## TEMPLATE INSTRUCTIONS

Below is a template you can edit and use to write to your MLA or other election Candidates. You can edit any part of this template to make it feel more like your own. The sections highlighted in yellow MUST be edited prior to sending.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Insert Date]

Dear [Insert Name of MLA or Candidate]

**Let me tell you a little about myself…**

[Insert 2-3 sentences that describe you and your role supporting a loved one that experiences disability - you might choose to include where your loved one with a disability works or volunteers, what they enjoy, and that they experience disability. You might also start to indicate what aspects of your loved one’s life you are most worried about - e.g. the quality of their support services, their access to AISH, their access to adequate PDD funded services, their access to affordable housing].

**My [insert relationship to loved one - i.e. “son” “daughter” “brother” “sister] is supported by** [**Skills Society**](http://www.skillssociety.ca)**, one of the largest disability rights and service organizations in Edmonton.** *Skills Society’s job is to work with all governments, whoever they are, to help ensure persons with disabilities like me can have a good life.*

I am sending this message because, as we approach the May 2023 election, I do not want Albertans with developmental disabilities, and the organizations that support them, to be forgotten once again.

**Who is Skills Society?**

* Non partisan, not-for-profit, charitable organization
* Provides essential daily living supports to nearly 450 adults and children with disabilities, 130 of whom have complex service needs
* 97% funded by the Persons with Developmental Disabilities Program (PDD)
* Known for our service innovation and systems change work
* Offer affordable and efficient community based and non institutional services
* Known for efficient, safe and innovative approaches to serving about 130 people labeled in the PDD systems as having complex service needs

**Albertans with developmental disabilities and the organizations that support them, urgently need your help with…**

1. **Ensuring proper funding to sustain essential, safe and dignified services.** The [reports and data](https://acds.ca/workforce/blueprint-cds.html) are clear. No increase from the government since 2014 has seriously negatively affected services and indirectly caused cost increases in Health and Justice. Learn about the wage issue and effects on staff and people we support at Skills Society [here.](https://acds.ca/advocacy/election-2023/index.html)
2. **A strategy for and funding for high quality staff education and training.** The closing of disability specific post secondary programs in Alberta has eroded disability support worker competencies jeopardising service quality and safety.
3. **Increased capacity to reduce waitlists and ensure people who need PDD and FSCD support can get it.** We ask for a commitment to fund the full and true costs of service delivery, including proper funding for administrative and indirect costs. We ask for a commitment to increase the capacity of service providers to help reduce the long waitlist of people waiting to receive PDD-funded supports.

[Inclusion Alberta’s Election Priorities](https://inclusionalberta.org/albertaelection2023/) and the Alberta Council of Disablity Services’ [**Project Blueprint report**](https://acds.ca/files/Workforce/BlueprintCDS_InitialAssessment.pdf) are two other places we strongly recommend you look for recommendations to support Albertans with developmental disabilities.

**Let me tell you a story that shows you why [Insert disability issue you want to focus on or are passionate about - either from above three listed or a different one like accessible/affordable housing or AISH increases] is so important.**

[Insert personal story that brings to life a specific issue you think is really important - for example you might share how living on AISH is not enough and how you want to see AISH increased or maybe finding a home that is accessible for your loved one is difficult and you want to see more accessible housing. Or maybe you are frustrated because your loved one’s support staff do not have enough training or education and you want to see more training for support workers].

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues further with you and appreciate you taking the time to consider the needs of people with disabilities like myself and their service providers.

Sincerely,

[Insert Name]

[Insert Signature]

[Insert contact information]