



March 9, 2016

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada
Hon. Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development
Hon. Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau, Minister Bains and Minister Duncan,

The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC), which represents over 15,000 federal scientists, and Evidence for Democracy (E4D), which advocates for the transparent use of evidence in democratic decision making by government, commend you for the great strides that you have taken to support science integrity since being elected in October 2015. Your government has already reinstated the mandatory long-form census and researchers at Environment Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada were promptly instructed that they can now speak freely to the public and the media.

We applaud this quick action to support the open communication of scientific information to the public. Yet the scale of communication restriction under the previous government has left a legacy of draconian communication policies in many departments that prohibit journalists from contacting government scientists directly.

It is clear that the government supports scientific integrity, but the policies and infrastructure are not in place to support it. **Science needs to be safeguarded from future attacks and new policies are needed to clarify the rules for government scientists, protect the integrity of their research and make it harder for future governments to muzzle scientists.**

We are recommending that the government safeguard science integrity by ensuring that the right to speak and a commitment to science integrity are included in the collective agreements for government scientists and that a formal Science Integrity Policy is developed and implemented in all science-based departments. This follows the model of similar Science Integrity Policies being implemented in the US under President Obama.

A broad science integrity policy would go beyond just ensuring that government science is open to the public. Scientific integrity involves the application of clear concepts of transparency, collaboration among peers, avoidance of conflict of interest and ensuring that high standards of research, ethics and impartiality prevail.

A comprehensive science integrity policy would include measures to ensure:

- The right for scientists to speak out publicly about science and their research;
- The public release of scientific information in a timely manner;
- The right of last review for scientists to ensure that their work is not being misrepresented in communications documents;
- Safeguards against scientific misconduct; and
- Protection from undue commercial influence.

Ensuring and enhancing scientific integrity is vital to the decision making process and essential for the government to achieve its stated goals of improving evidence-based decision-making.

Sincerely,

Debi Daviau
President

The Professional Institute of
the Public Service of Canada
250 Tremblay Road
Ottawa, ON K1G 3J8
Tel.: 1-800-267-0446
www.pipsc.ca

Katie Gibbs
Executive Director

Evidence for Democracy
P.O. Box 87004
Ottawa, ON K2P 2P1
Tel.: 1-844-335-3339
www.evidencefordemocracy.ca