DATE

FOR A LOCAL MEMBER WHO IS NOT A CABINET MINISTER[Name of Member], M.P.

FOR A LOCAL MEMBER WHO IS A CABINET MINISTER, The Honourable [name], M.P.

House of Commons

Parliament Buildings

Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6

Email: first name.second name@parl.gc.ca

**Re: Canada’s Opioid Crisis – Declarations and Action Plans**

Dear [Mr./Mrs./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_] / FOR A LOCAL MEMBER WHO IS A CABINET MINISTER: Dear Minister \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

I am a member ofthe an affiliate of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) that works to improve the status of women and to promote human rights, public education, social justice and peace in Canada and abroad.

I am calling on you to urge the Government of Canada, the provinces and territories, municipalities and other community organizations to work together with stakeholders and health practitioners to improve support and implementation for the Federal Action on Opioids dated December 16, 2020.

One in five Canadians experiences chronic pain and significantly delayed access to treatment. Data from the Government of Canada show that there have been over 17,000 opioid-related deaths, and almost 22,000 hospitalisations, in the last four and a half years. Two-thirds of the deaths were attributable to 20- to 49-year-olds and three quarters of these were males.

Based on the current scientific and medical knowledge and experience, the treatment for opioid addiction and available remedies need to be made more immediately accessible to those in need. The harms from opioid use, whether from prescriptions or from street drugs, must be successfully alleviated by health and security personnel, counsellors and first responders. It behooves society to provide better pain management and addiction support for persons who find themeselves at the mercy of their chronic dependence.

Use of opioids for personal use must, of necessity, be decriminalised in order to reduce stigma, and encourage the seeking of assistance in cases of crisis. The current influx of newer, more powerful synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl, continues to overwhelm law enforcement, acute care facilities, and inter-disciplinary treatment practitioners. Additionally, a reduction in adverse effects from opioid use would be considerably improved by the establishment of a cross-Canada electronic prescription monitoring system available to doctors and pharmacists.

We ask that you support, encourage and take comprehensive action to mitigate the impact of the opioid crisis for the health and overall well-being of Canadian society.

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss this pressing issue and **our deep concern regarding Canada’s growing opioid crisis**.

Yours sincerely,