



May 30, 2006

The Hon. Tony Clement, P.C. M.P.
Minister of Health,
House of Commons,
Parliament Buildings,
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Clement,

We bring warm greetings to you on behalf of the Ecumenical Health Care Network. Churches have historically played a role in providing health care and members of the Ecumenical Health Care Network continue to be involved in health care.

The Ecumenical Health Care Network also contributes to public policy discussions about health care. We have submitted briefs to The Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science, and Technology and to the Royal Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada.

We wrote to Prime Minister Harper on March 31, 2006 concerning the Government of Alberta's proposal for "Health Care Renewal". A copy of this letter was sent to your office (also enclosed). We appreciate and acknowledge that the provision of health care services is changing in Canada. However, in our view, these changes can and should take place within the Canada Health Act. Although health care falls within the jurisdiction of the provinces and territories we affirm the central role of the federal government and its responsibility for the enforcement of the Canada Health Act. .

One current challenge in the provision of health care is reducing wait times. We believe that the changes needed to reduce wait times can occur within our publicly funded system as evidenced by innovations already tested.

We would like to meet with you to discuss this and other policy issues as we work together for the health and well-being of all Canadians.

Please be assured of our prayers and support.

Sincerely,



Jim Marshall, co-chair
The United Church of Canada
Ecumenical Health Care Network



Linda Nichols, co-chair
The Anglican Church of Canada
Ecumenical Health Care Network

The Ecumenical Health Care Network (www.ccc-cce.ca/english/justice/health)

Canadian churches working together to contribute an ethical voice to the ongoing dialogue and debate about the future of health care in Canada. The Ecumenical Health Network is a project of the Commission on Justice and Peace of the **Canadian Council of Churches**. The Canadian Council of Churches is the largest ecumenical body in Canada, now representing 20 churches of Anglican, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, Protestant and Roman Catholic traditions; together the Canadian Council of Churches represents 85 per cent of Christian Canadians who profess adherence to a church.