

(Name) Member of Parliament (Constituency)
(Street Address)
(City, Town) (Postal Code)

(Date)

Dear (Mr. Ms. Mrs.) (Surname),

I am writing as one of your constituents to express my concerns about the use of routine strip searches in women's prisons across Canada and to urge you promote an end to this traumatizing practice.

90% of Indigenous women and 85% of non-Indigenous women in prison have been sexually and/or physically abused prior to imprisonment. Strip searching mirrors the abuse women experience prior to being incarcerated and functions to (re)traumatize them. The Supreme Court of Canada, in *R v Golden*, stated that women and minorities can experience strip searches as sexual assault and that strip searching should not be used as routine procedure. Yet they are used on a routine basis every day in Canadian prisons. International standards, such as the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners (The "Bangkok Rules"), similarly state that strip searching should not be used as routine procedure.

In the era of #MeToo, now is the time to move away from a practice that forces women to remove their clothes and perform actions with intimate parts of their body; this is state-sanctioned sexual assault. This is why I am asking you to write to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness to request that he exercise his authority to end routine strip searches in women's prisons.

Your willingness to take action now will demonstrate your support for substantive equality for women.

Thank you for your commitment.

I look forward to receiving a response from you.

Sincerely,

(Name)
(Street Address)
(Town, Province)
(Postal code)