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To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to give my full support for John Douglas in his networking and information gathering at the PORTO HR19 conference this spring. Mr. John Douglas is the former Mayor of Port Alberni and has been a strong advocate for finding solutions to addictions, housing, and mental health issues in our community.

Canadians are nearly thirty times more likely to die of an overdose under our current laws that criminalize those who use drugs. Harm reduction policies in Portugal are inspiring for the effect that they seem to have had on reducing addictions related deaths. We often look for models practiced in other countries which may have value in Canada if implemented into our social programs.

Any assistance you can provide to Mr. Douglas towards better understanding this system will be greatly appreciated by my office and our citizens. We look forward to what he will bring back.

As the Member of Parliament for Courtenay-Alberni I have seen first hand the impact that the opioid crisis is causing in every corner of my riding and I am committed to helping develop solutions wherever possible.

I would be more than happy to discuss this matter further with you.

Sincerely,

Gord Johns, MP