

## Yukon Legislative Assembly

Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

March 3, 2023

Hon. Tracy McPhee  
Minister of Health and Social Services  
Box 2703  
Y1A 2C6

Dear Minister McPhee,

As you are aware, British Columbia recently made the bold and important decision to make all prescription contraceptives, including oral contraceptives ("the pill"), copper and hormonal IUDs, a subdermal implant, a contraceptive injection, and emergency oral contraceptives ("morning after pill") free for all B.C. residents.

This decision is anti-poverty and reproductive justice in action. It will allow more individuals to access the prescription contraceptives they need, be it as a form of birth control or for the many other medical reasons someone may require it.

I am hopeful that the Yukon will immediately follow suit.

In the last fall legislative sitting, you brought forward Motion 448, which states:

*THAT it is the opinion of this House that reproductive healthcare is essential to the health, freedom, and the social and economic futures of women and girls and that the right to an abortion in Yukon and access to abortion services in the territory need to be protected.*

During the debate for this motion, MLA Blake noted that many individuals in the Yukon still struggle to afford prescription contraceptives. Cost as a barrier to

access is particularly concerning as it goes against the value that reproductive healthcare is essential.

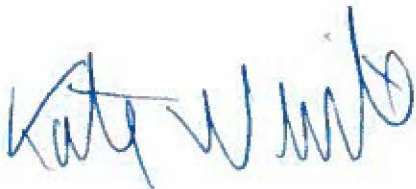
In your response to MLA Blake during the debate for Motion 448, you stated that she was incorrect, and listed various options for low-income Yukoners or those who are under 18 to receive coverage for contraception. These services only cover a small percentage of Yukoners who rely on prescription contraceptives. As such, cost remains a serious barrier for prescription contraceptives in the Yukon.

This barrier also contradicts the then Premier's 2021 mandate letter to you as Minister of Health and Social Services, which included work to "support Yukoners in making a reproductive care plan with physician input, including subsidies for birth control and fertility treatments." It is very concerning and unfortunate that subsidising birth control is missing from the most recent mandate letter you received under Premier Pillai this year.

Given that the cost of living is continuing to increase, that we both agree reproductive healthcare is essential, and that there is a clear and simple precedent from the B.C. government's own decision, will your government immediately make prescription contraceptives, including oral contraceptives ("the pill"), copper and hormonal IUDs, a subdermal implant, a contraceptive injection, and emergency oral contraceptives ("morning after pill") **free** to all Yukoners?

I look forward to your government taking the bold action that is required to make healthcare accessible to every Yukoner.

Sincerely,



Kate White

Leader of the Yukon NDP

MLA Takhini-Kopper King