

December 18, 2015

Jane Thornthwaite, MLA,
Chair, Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth

Doug Donaldson, MLA
Deputy Chair, Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth

c/o Parliamentary Committees Office
Room 224, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Chairs of the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth:

Re: Retention of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth in BC

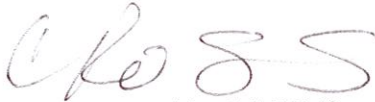
The BC Association of Social Workers (BCASW) has a long history of advocating for best practices in our profession and for social justice, especially for the most vulnerable. Child protection and child/family advocacy are strong priorities for our members.

We recognize the important role of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth and the positive impact of the work of Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond and her staff over the past two terms of her mandate. The Representative has been a strong, vocal advocate for children and youth and her recommendations for systemic change have consistently been instructive and informed by real stories, direct advocacy, and solid research.

The need for this role will not end in 2016. We urge the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth to recommend continuation of the Office and the role it plays in protecting children and youth and in raising awareness of the changes needed by government, communities, and all BC residents. Regular external reviews, independent oversight, and reliable reporting to the public remain essential.

Thank you for considering our viewpoint.

Yours sincerely,



Carol Ross MSW, Lead for Child Welfare, BC Association of Social Workers



Leya Eguchi MSW, RSW, Vice President, BC Association of Social Workers



Dianne Heath MSW, RSW, Executive Director

Cc Kate Ryan-Lloyd, Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees



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