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Geoff Crowe  
Director of Legal Services  
Edmonton Police Service  
9620 103a Avenue NW  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5H 0H7

Mr. Crowe,

I am an associate professor of journalism at Mount Royal University, former vice-president of the Canadian Association of Journalists, an award-winning investigative journalist, and a recognized expert in the use of freedom of information laws. I am writing to you on behalf of myself, as well as the chair of Mount Royal University's journalism program Sally Haney, with regards to the Edmonton Police Service's current refusal to accredit Progress Report as a media outlet.

I appreciate that, as a result of the changing and diversifying media landscape, such classification decisions can be difficult. However, the test as to whether an organization should be considered a media outlet should not hinge on its political persuasion. If that were the case, many of the world's most respected news organizations, many of which were established for political purposes, would not pass it.

Instead, the test should be whether the organization adheres to the journalistic process in their reporting, making their best effort possible to obtain and publicize the truth – regardless of what that may be. In doing so, such organizations create a more informed citizenry that is better able to exercise their rights to hold public and private institutions to account, including law enforcement agencies.

To the best of my knowledge, the Progress Report currently adheres to this process. And, by frustrating their efforts to do so, the Edmonton Police Service is hindering the organization's journalistic responsibility and, by extension, democracy. Moreover, I am deeply concerned by the Edmonton Police Service's decision to divert Progress Report's requests for information through the freedom of information process. Freedom of information legislation was never intended to be the principle avenue by which public requests for information are handled. Indeed, treating those laws as such is contrary to their spirit, as well as Canadians' quasi-constitutional right to know.

Therefore, I am hoping the Edmonton Police Service will promptly accredit the Progress Report and, in doing so, fulfill its democratic obligation to be responsive to public inquiries,

including those from the public's news media representatives. I look forward to your reply to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SMH', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sean Michael Holman  
Associate Professor of Journalism

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Sally Haney' in a cursive script.

Sally Haney  
Associate Professor and Chair  
Journalism and Broadcast Media Studies