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July 9, 2021

Keith Jeannot, CEO
Directwest
355 Longman Crescent, Regina, SK S4N 6G3
Dear Mr Jeannot:

I write regarding your appraisal of SEIU-West's latest billboards as offensive to Directwest's "guidelines", to the extent that you have rejected both our billboards *and* the revenue they would generate for the publicly-owned Crown Corporation over which you preside.

In an email to our office, your representative made clear that Directwest has "...sensitivity guidelines *when it comes to political or union messaging that has to be approved by our CEO...*" only then to be told this is a standard applied to all advertising. It appears to be subjective as to whether you apply this to union/political advertising or *all advertising*. Further, you have stated your advertising guidelines won't allow campaign messaging that is "divisive" in nature - exactly what about our campaign do you feel objectively meets this criteria?

How, exactly, does a simple request for respect, protection and fair wages for the thousands of essential workers serving Saskatchewan's front line today offend the Directwest guidelines? Specifically, we are looking for clarification on how you determined our campaign, to properly support essential workers and by extension, the people of Saskatchewan whom they serve (as do you), could be considered problematic at all? The identical ads are in heavy rotation on your competitors' billboards already; and yet, somehow we've avoided a civil war.

SEIU-West has made significant investments in publicly-owned Directwest to advertise and promote issues that are important to our members and the entire province of Saskatchewan. You'd think this would be significant and received with gratitude, yet we're left only with questions about why you've suddenly made the bizarre decision to assign completely arbitrary, politically-biased guidelines to a union campaign for essential workers.

With a billboard budget alone worth over \$150,000/year, we are happy to spend our advertising dollars with another firm and have committed to advising the people of Saskatchewan, including all stakeholders in our province's labour sector, that partisan politics have infiltrated Directwest to this troubling extent. We expect that you will cancel our billboard contract in its entirety.

If Directwest's new censorship mandate changes in the future, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Barbara Cape
President
SEIU-West

cc: Dave Kuntz, President, UNIFOR Local 1s
Ward Paterson, Media Specialist, Directwest

SEIU-West is a Scent Free Workplace