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SOCON Solutions to the GSA-SOGI Debacle

A few months prior to the vote on GSA law (Bill 10), Premier Prentice's goals were fairness, balance, and building consensus: *"...because rights need to be advanced, children need to be protected, parents need to be reassured and school boards need to be respected."* To date not one of these goals has been achieved. Liberal MLA Laurie Blakeman, original sponsor of the bill was jubilant upon its unanimous approval: *"I'm really glad that the government was brave enough to take that step, and I will give you credit for being brave. That one wasn't easy, and it wasn't a gimme. I didn't think you'd be able to go there."* Two months later the NDP came to power and *SOGI Inclusive Education Policy*, and Bill 24 – [more] *Support for GSAs*, have been added to the legislative/policy debacle.

Alberta's social conservatives will remain "tossed under the bus" unless the UCP campaigns on this short list of imperative legal/policy remedies:

- Uphold traditional parental rights and family values by setting the minimum age requirement to 16 (high school - Grade 10) for independent sexual orientation and/or gender self-identity while at school, and for GSA membership, apart from parental knowledge and approval.
- Protect the health/sexual development of all Alberta children: (1) by preventing GSA club formation at elementary and junior high schools (Grades K-9) or insisting on parental approval for GSA membership (K-9); and (2) by precluding "ideology-based" [non-scientific], "biased/affirmative action" curriculum development.
- Prevent erosion of freedoms of speech and religion in schools by legally defining what homophobia is/is not following the Criminal Code 319 hate speech model, e.g. - *Statements do not constitute homophobia: (1) which are true; (2) which are made in good faith, respectfully expressed to establish by argument an opinion on a religious subject or on a belief in a religious text; and (3) which are relevant to any subject of public interest, for public benefit, which are believed to be true.*
- Set in place clear boundaries upon which to regulate ideological/political activism in our schools, including critical revision of the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) publication *GSAs and QSAs in Alberta Schools: A Guide for Teachers*, especially ending Type 3 & 4 GSAs.
- Establish needed institutional (Principal, School Board, Ministry) oversight and accountability requirements for GSAs and GSA networks (Calgary-Edmonton-Alberta), including approved and publically accessible club constitutions and network charters.

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