

Subject: Jordan Peterson Show at Canadian Tire Centre

We are writing today to express our deep shock and disappointment with the choice of the Canadian Tire Centre to host Jordan Peterson for a forthcoming show on January 30th, 2023 as part of his wider tour.

We are a coalition of organizations, small businesses and labour unions that represent thousands of residents across the City of Ottawa and surrounding areas, many of whom are from equity-deserving communities and almost all of whom experienced the traumatic events of the occupation of our city by the far-right.

This three-week event led to [hundreds of incidents of harassment](#) (400 calls were made to the police alone in the first two weeks) towards residents and journalists, the closure of the Rideau Centre Mall that led to hundreds of workers losing weeks of income, the shutdown of the downtown bus network and disruptions in supportive care services for people with disabilities and much more.

Despite this egregious situation, Peterson was an avid supporter of the so-called “Freedom Convoy” that spurred the occupation. He even had some of the leaders on his podcast including BJ Dichter and showed support for Tamara Lich.

However, this is not the only reason that we express our concern around this event. The toxic, and often violent, rhetoric touted by Peterson—whose quasi-academic ideas are misogynistic, homophobic, transphobic, and racist has led to an increased environment of hate, especially toward the trans community, that has been very present in Ottawa.

Last year, for example, anti-trans activists arrived in Ottawa to protest in front of multiple high schools in local neighbourhoods to protest the teaching of so-called “gender ideology” with arguments similar to those of Peterson who rose to infamy through his opposition to Bill C-16, the Bill that amended the Canadian Human Rights Act to include gender identity and gender expression. Thankfully, those in the community came together to block out this hatred.

Peterson has also advocated in favour of ideas like “enforced monogamy” that encourage the superiority of men over women and insinuates that they should be treated as sexual objects instead of equals.

This is why it is even more surprising to us that a talent agency like the American-based *Creative Arts Agency* (CAA) has decided to represent Peterson.

The CAA has a separate foundation dedicated to “harnessing the power and reach of the entertainment industry to create positive social change.” The foundation prides itself on its work for racialized communities, women’s rights and LGBTQ+ rights making it doubly confounding as to why it feels as though Peterson is consistent with its “socially progressive image.”

Peterson and his followers will often argue that protesting or calling for the cancellation of his events is akin to censorship. However, we are not writing this letter simply because we disagree with his ideas but because the ideas espoused by Peterson directly jeopardize the safety and well-being of marginalized communities, especially women and transgender people.

In short, there is a difference between free speech and hate speech. The views of Dr. Peterson clearly veer more towards the latter. The tolerance of differing ideas is about mutual respect and dignity. We believe the views expressed by Peterson and his supporters reflect neither of these values.

If the CAA, the Canadian Tire Centre, Ottawa Senators Group and our City Council truly value the lives and well-being of equity-seeking groups throughout the City of Ottawa they will act quickly and work together to ensure this show does not take place in our city.

To make sure this happens we call on:

The Creative Arts Agency (CAA) to:

To cancel their Ottawa show and drop Peterson as a client

Ottawa City Council to:

Show its commitment to the motion passed at the December 7th council meeting around measures for the LGBTQ+ community and send a letter to the Canadian Tire Centre, Ottawa Senators Group and Creative Artists Agency clearly outlining the concerns of residents and their desire to cancel the show

Signed:

Wisdom 2 Action

Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity

Centretown Community Health Centre

Defend Choice

Kind Space

Council of Canadians

Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 2626

Ottawa Pride Hockey

Project Agape

Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW)

City for All Women Initiative (CAWI)

Planned Parenthood Ottawa

Horizon Ottawa

Criminalization and Punishment Education Project (CPEP)

Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments (WISE)

PRIDE in Mississippi Mills

EmDash

Qu'ART - Ottawa Queer Arts Collective

Tall Tree Psychology

TransForming Connections

Mississippi Valley Textile Museum

Democratic Socialists of Canada Ottawa-Gatineau Chapter

Community Solidarity Ottawa

Canadian Anti-Hate Network

OCETFO Human Rights Committee

Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario 2SLGBTQIA+ Committee

LIVE! on Elgin

Bright Light Veterinary Eye Care

Ottawa Historical Fencing Society

Ottawa Dyke March

International Workers of the World - Ottawa Branch

Veterans Accountability Commission

The Autistic and Neurodivergent Liberation Front of Ottawa