



THE CANADIAN
BAR ASSOCIATION
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January 25, 2023

Via email: mcu@justice.gc.ca

The Honourable David Lametti, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
284 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0H8

Dear Minister Lametti:

Re: Unified Family Courts

I write on behalf of the Family Law Section of the Canadian Bar Association (CBA Section) to express our continued support for the expansion of Unified Family Courts (UFCs) across Canada.

The CBA is a national association of over 37,000 lawyers, law students, notaries and academics, and our mandate includes seeking improvement in the law and the administration of justice. The CBA Section consists of family law specialists from all regions of Canada, with clients representing the full range of individuals impacted by family breakdown.

The CBA Section would like to thank the Government of Canada for the significant funding for UFCs in the *Budget Implementation Act, 2018, No.1*.

CBA Section members witness the benefits of UFCs in their daily practice, such as distinct procedures and a specialized bench with substantive and procedural expertise in family law. We echo Justice Canada's premise that UFCs resolve issues more efficiently. They increase access to justice by reducing confusion, delay, jurisdictional conflicts, multiplicity of litigation and by centralizing specialized judges and family justice services. The benefits of UFCs are particularly important for survivors of family violence and other marginalized and vulnerable communities.

The Commissioner of Federal Judicial Affairs reports 89 vacancies on federal-jurisdiction courts as of January 3rd, 2023, affecting all provinces and territories. The CBA Section believes maintaining full judicial complements is another critically important component of ensuring public access to, and confidence in, our justice system.

We appreciate that the UFC model is a collaborative exercise which engages federal, provincial and territorial governments. As the multi-year funding in the *Budget Implementation Act, 2018, No.1* comes to an end, the CBA Section supports continued federal funding for all jurisdictions that wish to implement or expand UFCs. While we are not privy to the specifics of the requests and business plans put forth by the

provinces and territories, recognizing the integrated nature of the justice system in Canada, we believe that opportunities exist to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the justice system as a whole. Given the demonstrated need for more judges and the proven benefits of UFCs, we trust that the federal government will work with its provincial and territorial counterparts to remove any barriers to the proper functioning of the justice system.

The CBA Section appreciates the opportunity to share its support. We would be pleased to discuss the issue further.

Yours truly,

(original letter signed by Véronique Morissette for Annie Kenet)

Annie Kenet
Chair, CBA Family Law Section

cc. François Giroux, Judicial Affairs Advisor, Francois.Giroux@justice.gc.ca
Lisa Jørgensen, Director of Policy, Lisa.Jorgensen@justice.gc.ca