**[Ds Group Name]**
[Contact Information] [Date]

**Subject: Ensuring a Better Future for Canadians with Down syndrome**

Dear [Party Leader/local MP Candidate],

On behalf of [Ds Group Name], we are writing to urge you and your party to prioritize the rights, dignity, and inclusion of people with disabilities—particularly those with Down syndrome—in your platform for the upcoming federal election.

While Canada has made progress toward becoming a more inclusive society, individuals with Down syndrome continue to face significant barriers in education, employment, healthcare, and independent living. The next federal government has a unique opportunity to enact policies that promote full participation and equal opportunities for people with Down Syndrome.

**Key Priorities for People with Down Syndrome**

**1. Income Security and the Canada Disability Benefit (CDB)**

The introduction of the CDB is a positive step, but further action is needed to prevent disability-related poverty. We urge your party to:

* Increase payments to ensure recipients are above the poverty line, accounting for the additional costs associated with disability.
* Expand eligibility so all individuals with disabilities living in poverty, including those with Down syndrome, can receive support.
* Ensure the benefit remains tax-exempt and is protected from provincial and territorial clawbacks.

**2. Disability Tax Credit (DTC) Reform**

Families and individuals with Down syndrome face challenges in accessing essential financial support. We ask your party to:

* Automatically approve the DTC for individuals with lifelong disabilities such as Down syndrome.
* Eliminate unnecessary reassessments for permanent conditions.
* Cover the costs of professional assessments required for DTC applications.

**3. Inclusive Employment Pathways**

People with Down syndrome deserve equitable access to meaningful paid employment. We urge your party to:

* Ensure federally funded employment programs include individuals with Down syndrome.
* Invest in job training and supported employment programs

**4. Inclusive Education**

Many students with Down syndrome are placed in segregated classrooms due to perceived resource limitations. We ask your party to:

* Ensure federal education policies support inclusive learning environments.
* Mandate inclusive education programs that provide individualized support in regular neighborhood classrooms.

**5. Healthcare Equity & Access**

People with Down syndrome have unique medical needs and often face gaps in care. We urge your party to:

* Improve training for healthcare providers on Down syndrome-specific care.
* Ensure timely access to specialized medical services, including cardiac and early dementia screenings.
* Invest in research and resources to improve health outcomes for individuals with Down syndrome.

**6. Accessible and Affordable Housing**

Independent living should be an option for all individuals with disabilities, including those with Down syndrome. We ask your party to:

* Support community-based living options over institutional care
* Increase investment in housing that is both affordable and accessible.
* Mandate accessibility standards for all new federally funded housing projects.
* Develop and enforce Accessibility Standards Canada’s housing standards, including retrofitting existing homes to meet accessibility needs.

**A Call for Action**

As you develop your platform, we urge your party to engage directly with individuals with Down syndrome, their families, and advocacy organizations to ensure your policies reflect their real-life experiences and needs. Your leadership can help build a Canada where people with Down syndrome have full and equal opportunities to participate in their communities, workplaces, and cultural life.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues further and to learn how your party plans to address them. Thank you for your time and commitment to making Canada a more inclusive and equitable country for all.

**It was never okay: Forward, not backward.**

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Role]
[Ds Group Name]
[Contact Information]