

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
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Premier@ontario.ca

The Honourable Julie Aviva Dabrusin
Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Nature
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6
julie.dabrusin@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Todd J. McCarthy
Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
5th Floor
777 Bay St.
Toronto, ON
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16 July 2026

Dear Premier Ford, Minister Dabrusin, and Minister McCarthy

Re: Northern Ontario Wildfires and Funding Cuts

This letter is written with great sadness and anger at the 148 wildfires currently affecting Ontario. Indigenous and northern communities are carrying the heaviest weight of this disaster and displacement, which echoes the consistent pattern of underinvestment in the infrastructure meant to protect these communities, our province, and the environment we all share.

Many of the communities being evacuated right now are First Nations, including Namaygoosisagagun First Nation, Whitesand First Nation, Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation, Gakijwanong Anishinaabe Nation and Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek. These lands that have sustained First Nations peoples for generations. Being in solidarity with these communities means action; real, sustained commitment to funding that fits the magnitude of what northern and Indigenous communities are currently experiencing, and infrastructure and systems that are put in place before the next fire season, rather than taking action only when wildfires are worsening. The impacts of these wildfires are also affecting many other communities, as the smoke from these fires has spread across Ontario, and we are all feeling the weight of this crisis

A small pink flower with a green stem and leaves.

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LGBT YouthLine is calling on the provincial and federal governments to work together to reinstate the \$42 million cut to wildland firefighting; the \$4 million cut to emergency preparedness; and to increase base funding for the wildland firefighting program. The consequences of these funding cuts are what we are seeing happen today and impacting the communities who are forced to continuously advocate for their rights, existence, and safety. It is also fundamentally necessary for the federal government to reverse their investments in the fossil fuel industry and focus on reducing our emission levels immediately.

We are also calling for a standing emergency and evacuation framework that supports communities in the northern and remote areas and funds the cost of displacement while ensuring emergency centers are safe and identity-affirming for 2SLGBTQ+ youth. We call for decisions about fire management, evacuation, relocation, recovery, and aid to be led by Indigenous and northern communities themselves. We also urge the governments to ensure we are prepared to support all communities through the impacts that these wildfires have on air quality across the province and country. Lastly, we call for robust and immediate investments in environmental protections, infrastructure, and emergency preparedness. Our collective futures depend on it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read "Lauren Pragg".

Lauren Pragg

Executive Director

LGBT YouthLine

