



NEWS RELEASE

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Senator Denise Batters, Q.C.

Minister Hajdu, Please Champion Mental Health at the Cabinet Table

Regina - Senator Denise Batters today congratulated Status of Women Minister Patty Hajdu on being named the Champion of Mental Health Parliamentarian for 2016. Minister Hajdu will receive the honour from the Canadian Alliance of Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH). Senator Batters was the award winner in 2015.

“I offer my congratulations to Minister Hajdu on this prestigious honour,” Senator Batters said. “I encourage her to carry on her good work for those suffering with mental illness. As a federal Minister, she has a unique vantage point as the Trudeau Government drafts physician-assisted suicide legislation. I hope Minister Hajdu will use her place at the federal Cabinet table to convince the Government to exclude psychological suffering as a sole basis for accessing physician-assisted suicide.”

“We are at an important juncture in the mental health community as we await this legislation,” she added. “Minister Hajdu must convince the Trudeau Government to make the right choice on this crucial issue facing Canadians with mental illness – an issue of life and death.”

Senator Batters also noted that Health Minister Jane Philpott is scheduled to give the keynote address at the Champions of Mental Health Awards celebration in May.

“I call upon both of these Ministers, who will be integral to this wonderful and important event, to truly champion the cause of mental health at the Cabinet table, starting with this pivotal legislation,” she said.

“The preservation of hope for mentally ill people is absolutely paramount. Those who endure psychological suffering need our support, our resources and our promise that we will never give up on them, even when they see no option but to give up on themselves.”

“I ask Minister Hajdu and Minister Philpott to do the right thing and insist that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Cabinet implement strict safeguards for the vulnerable – especially those who struggle with mental illness – when drafting legislation on physician-assisted suicide.”

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