

PAUL PRODERICK

August 9, 2022

Mr. Scott Smith
President & CEO Hockey Canada
Suite 201
151 Canada Olympic Road SW
Calgary, AB
T3B 6B7

Dear Mr. Smith,

Hockey Canada has failed my son and every boy or girl who has ever laced on their skates with a dream. As a former player and current volunteer I have served in many roles with my minor hockey association. Serving as a trainer, a coach, on the minor hockey executive in various roles I recently retired as president after a number of years to allow a new generation a chance to grow the game. For the first time in my years' in minor hockey I am ashamed to be part of the Hockey Canada organization. Years of volunteer hours, mentoring, following the rules and encouraging fair play have been destroyed by the recent disclosures of the cover up of incidents surrounding the WJC Team of 2018.

As past president of our association I worked with others to provide hockey at as low a cost as possible to our membership. At the same time our association implemented background checks for our volunteers and enforced our own code of conduct with parents and coaches long before the "Respect In Sport" program became mandatory in the OMHA. Who would have guessed at the same time Hockey Canada was covering up transgressions at the elite level of hockey in our country.

In my calculations about 5% of our hockey budget over my time on our executive has gone to Hockey Canada for Insurance Premiums and assessments. Such money we believed was destined to those who had suffered an injury that required financial aid. I can never recall a member of our association making a claim and many are aghast that monies supplied for insurance purposes and assessments were directed to hush payments. Shameful!

For the past five years I've spent every last Saturday in September welcoming our IP players to the sport. New parents have lots of questions and nervousness as their youngsters begin the sport of a lifetime. This year we are beginning to field questions about Hockey Canada's current mess. We can only talk about our own association as we can't defend the actions of Hockey Canada. We emphasize that we follow the rules, encourage skill development and have fun. At the same time we pledge to keep our players as safe as humanly possible.

It is apparent that the relationship between Hockey Canada and its media partners has been a factor in this situation. Selection shows, exhibition games, tournament coverage of players as young as 16 has created a clear hierarchy of player within Hockey Canada. Players at an elite level are put on a pedestal long before they are adults and are often unable to deal with the attention drawn to them. With the glorification of these teenagers I'm surprised more incidents haven't happened or have they?

As our association moves towards celebrating its 50th season we continue to support house league and representative play. House league hockey is the foundation of Canadian Hockey. The vast majority of fees come from this level of player. In all our years only one of our players has ever played in the NHL. For years many in the grassroots have watched as elite players and teams get all the exposure as can be demonstrated by a quick look at provincial websites to see this emphasis. It is time for Hockey Canada to split/divest itself of programming at various levels. Govern hockey at the elite level or house league but not both. These past few months has demonstrated that Hockey Canada has lost touch with the majority of its membership base.

Young people make mistakes and hopefully learn from them. I believe the adults responsible for this cover up of the transgressions should be held accountable for their actions. With this in mind I believe the following as an appropriate course of action:

- The CEO of Hockey Canada and all members of the board of directors need to resign
- Branch presidents should elect a slate of directors to serve a term of no more than three years who will appoint an interim CEO
- All staff involved in the cover up of the incident involving the WJC Team of 2018 must be terminated and not be permitted to serve with any organization under the umbrella of Hockey Canada
- Hockey Canada needs to divest its dependence on TSN

With the past few years of the COVID crisis we have all suffered. I would spend 5 of 7 days a week screening participants and dealing with the public who often challenged the mandates we were

asked to enforce. Our association and many others took quite a loss in numbers and sponsorships. This is not unique to hockey as we witnessed other sports organization suffer. Trying to regain our membership has not been made any easier by the cloud hanging over Hockey Canada. At a local level volunteers and participants will continue to follow the rules and be transparent with our membership. It's time that Hockey Canada do the same. Band aid solutions will not work. Hockey Canada must act strongly to regain the confidence of its membership.

These are my own opinions based on my personal experiences and do not reflect the views of the Loyalist Township Minor Hockey Association.

Sincerely,

Paul Proderick

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Proderick".

Past President

Loyalist Township Minor Hockey Association

CC,

Honourable Pascale St. Onge, Minister of Sport

Mr. Mark Gerretsen, Member of Parliament

Ms. Andrea Skinner, Interim Chair of the Board, Hockey Canada