Dear [insert candidate name]:

Ontarians are facing a mental health crisis, a crisis further exacerbated by the pandemic. Across Ontario, there is a lack of equitable access to much needed services. We believe that accessibility requires affordability, inclusion in funded programs and the availability of more therapists.

**Make all mental health services provided by practitioners regulated under the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, S.O. 1991, c. 18 HST exempt.**

There are tens of thousands of psychotherapists providing care across Canada, helping people recover from addictions, cope with depression, address anxiety and live with the impact of trauma. Despite providing mental health care in the same manner as psychologists and social workers, psychotherapists are the only group of regulated mental health professionals subject to the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST). This effectively places a 13 per cent surcharge on this vital mental health care – and HST accounts for the cost of one additional session for each 7.6 sessions a client pays for.

Include registrants of the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) in all appropriate mental health programs.

Registered Psychotherapists (RPs), who are members of the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) provide valuable mental health care across a variety of settings. This provincially regulated but under-utilized mental health workforce is eager to do what they can for the people of Ontario and the province.

Many RPs work in collaboration with other allied health care professionals in private clinics. Provincially funded settings, however, are far less likely to include RPs.

**Maintain the Master**’**s Degree class of CPO registration – and give all CPO registrants the title of “Psychologist”**

The College of Psychologists of Ontario (CPO) Council recently voted to eliminate the Master's class of registration. CPO registrants with an MA have long provided valuable and much-needed services, such as working within school boards to assess and diagnose children. This move to close registration for these registrants could significantly increase waitlists, remove a much-needed assessment service from schools, and make access to care more difficult.

Additionally, the OAMHP strongly believes that anyone registered with the CPO should be given the title “Psychologist.” Currently, there are two titles for members of the CPO: Psychologist and Psychological Associate. A PhD is required for the Psychologist title and a Master's degree plus a minimum of four years of supervised practice is required for the Psychological Associate title. Both titles have the same scope of practice and are licensed to perform the same functions or "controlled acts", including diagnosis and psychotherapy. However, the title "Psychological Associate" has created much confusion over the years for clients and third-party payers such as Insurance Companies. Psychologists could continue to present academic credentials in the signature line of written communication and, of course, those with PhDs would continue to use the term “Dr.”

I know that you are committed to creating a fairer society and aiding the health of all of its citizens by improving access to care. That is why I am encouraging you to make these barriers to mental health a priority throughout the upcoming election.

Thank you for your support on these important matters. I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you further on these issues.

Yours truly,

{Your name}