Name of Member of Parliament

House of Commons

Ottawa, Ontario

Canada

K1A 0A6

Name of Senator

The Senate of Canada

Ottawa, Ontario

Canada

K1A 0A4

Dear Mr./Ms./Senator XXX,

As **POSTION** of the **PROVINCIAL** Common Ground Alliance, I am writing to you to show our support for Bill S-229, *An Act respecting underground infrastructure safety*, introduced by Senator Grant Mitchell and currently in Second Reading debate as of October 4, 2016. I hope you will also support this important legislation that will reduce the costs and increase safety associated with damages to our underground infrastructure by addressing the need for a mandated comprehensive call/click-before-you-dig notification system across Canada.

The **PROVINCIAL** Common Ground Alliance is a membership organization including companies and industry associations representing utilities, excavators, locators, road builders, telecommunications, railroad, water, landscapers, construction, engineering and design. The organization and its members are dedicated to improving worker safety, public safety, protection of the environment and preservation of the integrity of the infrastructure that provides goods and services essential to society and identifies, validates and promotes the adoption of effective ground disturbance and damage prevention practices.

Members of the **PROVINCIAL** Common Ground Alliance encourage all Senators and Parliamentarians to support Bill S-229 and for the federal government to mandate a comprehensive notification system for locate requests before digging.

There is a system of underground infrastructure that delivers and transports the services that support us in our daily lives, including energy, television, telecommunications, water and sewage. As Senator Mitchell stated in the Senate “It’s a web of wires, pipes, fibre optics and oil and gas pipelines that are at the root of our quality of life and our standard of living.” **INSERT SPECIFIC ADDITIONS HERE**

While currently there are Call/Click Before you Dig systems in Canada, there is no legislation, except in Ontario, to require its use. Bill S-229 would ensure the system is comprehensive and effective for underground infrastructure on federal lands.

There is a significant amount of cost and damages from people who hit underground infrastructure when they are digging, whether it is from major construction projects or homeowners digging in their yard. In 2015, there were more than 10,000 voluntary reports of damage to underground infrastructure in Canada, of which 79 per cent caused a disruption to services.

According to a report conducted by CIRANO, an organization based in Quebec, entitled *Socio-Economic Cost Assessment for Damages to Underground Infrastructures,* there are more than the obvious direct costs, including the cost of the materials, labour costs and administrative costs related to the damages. There are also indirect costs related to the damage, including intervention of emergency services, evacuations, loss of products, environmental impact, economic impact on businesses and risk of injury or death. According to the report, in 2014 in Quebec, damages to underground infrastructures resulted in at least $125 million in indirect costs. Further research has put national estimates at approximately $1 billion of societal costs.

While Bill S-229 covers underground infrastructure that is federally regulated or on federal lands, it is a positive step in the right direction. **INSERT SPECIFIC NOTES HERE ABOUT LOCAL/PROVINCIAL IMPACT**

The CCGA and its provincial chapters encourage you and your colleagues to take this simple step to increase safety and reduce costs for communities and their citizens and businesses across Canada. If you have any questions about notification systems or the CCGA, please do not hesitate to contact XXX at XXX.

Thank you for your time and support.