



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A pardon for Latimer devalues the lives of people with disabilities

Winnipeg, MB July 18, 2018 – The Saskatchewan farmer who killed his disabled daughter is applying for a new trial or a pardon and People First of Canada (PFC) sincerely hopes he gets neither of these.

In 1993, Tracy Latimer was murdered by her father. He put her in his truck and piped exhaust fumes inside and killed her through carbon monoxide poisoning. Tracy was 12 years old.

Through a trial, retrial, and appeals, Robert Latimer's second-degree murder conviction and 10-year minimum sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada. He finally went to prison in 2001. By 2008 he was out on day parole, with full parole granted in 2010.

Since he murdered his daughter and up to today, Latimer has stated that he had not done anything wrong. He has no regrets and has never apologized for taking her life. In fact, he stated in interviews that "What I did was right." It's why he is looking for a pardon now.

The Latimer case was one of the most polarizing in Canadian legal history – it divided the country. It was extremely demoralizing to Canadians with disabilities who felt that their basic right to exist was devalued and under attack.

"One of the sad facts of being a person with a disability is that other people make judgments about your life and if it is worth living," said Kory Earle, President of PFC. "And one of the harsh realities is that someone who is supposed to protect you just might harm you or actually kill you."

Shelley Fletcher, Executive Director of PFC, said, “Our organization has been involved in justice for Tracy since the beginning – the whole national disability community was. PFC was the original intervener in the 1997 appeal. We worked with five other disability groups to make sure his conviction and minimum 10-year sentence was upheld.”

Since Tracy Latimer was murdered, over 30 more people with disabilities have been murdered by their family or caregivers in Canada. Almost 60 percent of those killed were people with intellectual disabilities.

“We hope the Prime Minister and Minister of Justice deny Latimer’s application,” said Earle. “Robert Latimer murdered his daughter. He doesn’t deserve to have his record cleared. He doesn’t deserve to have his actions pardoned. The history of what he did should remain exactly where it is.”

-30-

People First of Canada is the national voice of people who have been labelled with an intellectual disability. The vision of People First is to see all citizens living equally in the community. For further information contact Shelley Fletcher, Executive Director for People First of Canada Phone: 204-784-7362 or by Email: sfletcher@peoplefirstofcanada.ca Find out more at www.peoplefirstofcanada.ca