Submission – Shelley Wright

Item No. 5 Opt-Out Program for the Advanced Metering System

To: Winnipeg City Council
Re: July 17 Council Agenda – Recommendation on Opt-Out for Advanced Metering System (AMS)

Dear Mayor Gillingham and Members of Council,

As a physician-diagnosed individual living with an environmentally induced disability caused by microwave radiation, I write to express my deep disappointment in the Executive Policy Committee's decision to reject the unanimous June 27 recommendation from the Water, Waste and Environment Committee to accommodate residents with disabilities.

I urge you to vote against the Executive Policy Committee recommendation listed in the July 17 Council Agenda:

"That the City not implement an Opt-Out Program for the Advanced Metering System in order to maximize the full benefits of the AMI technology."

This recommendation excludes Manitobans who are disabled by RF (radiofrequency) radiation and directly contradicts the principles of the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) and the Accessibility for Manitobans, which protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination and ensure equal access and participation in public life—including housing and employment.

The absence of a meaningful opt-out pathway forces those of us with microwave sensitivity into an impossible position: either endure harmful exposure or relocate, often to rural or isolated areas, which severely limits access to community support, employment, education, and medical care. This is neither ethical nor sustainable. In fact, it may constitute systemic discrimination.

The City's own staff report (June 27, 2025) acknowledges that other municipalities—including Toronto, Halifax, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Kamloops, Penticton, and Kelowna—have implemented opt-out programs, even if at a cost. Yet Winnipeg residents are given no clear explanation of how these programs operate, what fees are based on, or how accommodations would be handled for people who move into a home with an existing AMI meter.

Moreover, the report fails to present a clear and comprehensive opt-out proposal. It contains only a vague outline, dependent on future procurement processes, and

provides no concrete plan to ensure flexible or inclusive accommodations for people with disabilities. According to the current plan, even residents with a medical exemption would not be permitted to maintain an opt-out if they relocate—essentially barring them from securing appropriate housing.

We respectfully ask Council to:

1. **Reject Recommendation #1 in its current form.**
2. **Request a fully developed Opt-Out Program be submitted for review and public comment prior to any vote.**
3. **Ensure flexibility for medically necessary accommodations, especially for low-income and disabled residents.**
4. **Include disability accommodations in the RFP process, so that vendors propose solutions that address the needs of vulnerable populations—not the other way around.**

Without such measures, the City risks increasing homelessness, hardship, and litigation. The decision to force AMI meters on those who are medically unable to tolerate them is not just a technical issue—it's a human rights issue.

In the June 27th EPC meeting, Councillor Brian Mayes stated:

"The instructions to staff was to come back with an opt-out. Staff have not come back with an opt-out."

Indeed, what has been presented falls short. Councillors need a detailed proposal in order to make an informed, ethical, and legally sound decision.

As Barry Malowanchuk, retired professional engineer and former Manitoba Hydro employee, suggested:

"You should be able to identify the issues and let [vendors] come back with proposals."

The City has a duty to serve all of its residents—including those with disabilities. A transparent, flexible, and affordable opt-out program is a necessary step toward equity and inclusion.

Shelley Wright

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Safe Tech Schools Video

"In this International Declaration on the Human Rights of Children in the Digital Age there are three fundamental legal rights of children regarding the deployment and use of technology: their right to be free from intentionally addictive devices, platforms and apps; their right to be free from excessive exposure to wireless radiation; and their right to be free from commercial exploitation."

Respectful safe tech practices and wired devices foster optimal health and focused learning in Canadian classrooms. Wired technologies are inclusive, energy efficient and cost efficient. Wired devices promote caring, responsible citizens, who respect themselves, others, and the environment.

To: Mayor Scott Gillingham and City of Winnipeg Councillors,

I am sending this email on behalf of Frank Clegg, former President of Microsoft Canada and current CEO of Canadians for Safe Technology.

Frank Clegg has recorded a 2-minute, 40-second video sharing practical business, social, and policy-based solutions related to wireless utility meters.

We sincerely appreciate you taking a moment to watch this brief but important message ahead of the Council's discussion scheduled for Thursday, July 17th.

The video highlights critical considerations for protecting public health, respecting individual choice, and ensuring responsible technology deployment.

https://www.youtube.com/shorts/5UgT0R5mo-Q

If you have any questions, please contact Frank Clegg directly.

Sincerely,

Shelley Wright

Candians for Safe Technology, Leadership Team Member

Director, Canadian Educators for Safe Technology