



May 8, 2020

Mr. Alfred Kelly, Chairman and CEO
Ms. Stacey Madge, President and Country Manager
Mr. Brian Weiner, VP Product and Strategy
Visa Canada Corporation
77 King Street West
Suite 4400, P.O. Box 265
Toronto, ON M5K 1J5

Dear Mr. Kelly, Ms. Madge, and Mr. Weiner,

I would request that your company stop processing payments for the pornography industry, particularly from Canadian based customers, given its extensive promotion of nonconsensual content—including child sexual abuse, sex trafficking videos, rape, and more—and of content eroticizing sexual violence, incest, and racism.

By processing these payments, VISA is supporting and normalizing the pornography industry, despite its sexually exploitive nature including harm to performers, sex trafficking victims, and even large-scale public health. Today's "adult content" is misogynistic, violent, degrading, racist, and normalizes rape culture. We also know that there is a seamless link between pornography and other forms of sexual exploitation, such as human trafficking, including those who traffic children.¹

Based on this harm, Canadian Parliamentarians, both Members and Senators, have called on our government to investigate MindGeek, the parent company of Pornhub, one of the largest porn sites in the world, which is headquartered in Canada.²

As you may know, in 2019 PayPal stopped processing payments for the pornography industry during revelations of videos featuring sex trafficked women and sexually abused minors on mainstream pornography websites. VISA has demonstrated this kind of leadership in the past when it stopped processing payments for the sex trafficking and prostitution website Backpage.com, and I hope

¹ Farley, Melissa. "Pornography, Prostitution, & Trafficking: Making the Connections." Presented at the Pornography: a Public Health Crisis forum, hosted by National Center on Sexual Exploitation, Washington DC, July 14, 2015.

² Viersen, Arnold, Canadian MP, <https://twitter.com/ArnoldViersen/status/1237489509673164800>

to see VISA step up to the plate once again by refusing to process payments for the sexually exploitive pornography industry.

In response to the recognition that pornography is harmful to society, Defend Dignity will soon launch the 2020 version of our campaign, Choose Change. The goal of this campaign is to protect people, especially children, who are online to a greater extent this spring, from the harms of pornography--violent, sexually explicit images--via online services offered by companies and organizations. We would invite you to Choose Change and join our Change Maker List.

The Change Maker List will promote organizations that have pro-actively changed policies and practices to reduce the ease of access to violent, sexually explicit images.

As well, we are asking the public to join us in “challenging the harms of sexually violent images.” We will do this through the Choose Change website, where we will ask the public to contact organizations, such as Visa, to encourage them to embrace practices that will promote the overall public health of Canadians.

We will be celebrating organizations who have or will make these positive changes by highlighting them on our Change Maker List on the Choose Change website. We hope you will join us in this List, and join other businesses that have chosen change.

Again, I would request that Visa stop processing payments for the pornography industry, particularly from Canadian based customers. I believe this decision would be in line with your corporate ethical commitment to processing legal purchases, and that it will advance your reputation by refusing to aid human rights violations.

We are launching this campaign in May 2020, and we would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you and to discuss this matter. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

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