

Toronto, June 8, 2026

Dear Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is Ower Oberto, and I am the Chair of Latinos Positivos Toronto, a community-based organization supporting Latin American people living with HIV.

For our community, HIV is not something in the past, it is something we are still living every day. Many of our members face barriers like precarious immigration status, lack of access to healthcare, housing instability, and ongoing stigma.

I am here today to speak in strong support of Echoes: The AIDS Memorial Project.

But I also need to be clear: the way this item is currently framed is not appropriate.

An AIDS memorial is about remembrance, dignity, and healing. It should not be tied to narratives about enforcement, disorder, or safety concerns. That framing harms the very communities the memorial is meant to honour.

We are asking for something very reasonable:

First, that Echoes be supported as a community-led memorial.

Second, that The AIDS Memorial be considered as a separate item, not embedded in EC29.12.

And third, that proposals to fence or restrict access to Barbara Hall Park be rejected. These measures disproportionately impact people living with HIV, people who use drugs, unhoused individuals, and people in crisis, many of whom are part of our community.

Our members have lost partners, friends, and chosen family to HIV/AIDS. Others are still fighting to survive today under very difficult conditions.

This memorial must reflect that truth, with dignity, not stigma.

I urge you to do the right thing: support the memorial, separate it from this motion, and respect the voices of the communities most impacted.

Sincerely,



Ower Oberto
Chair LP