



February 2, 2022

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Victoria City Council, requesting favourable consideration and resolutions of support for the current legal challenge against the discrimination of freedom of religion in Quebec's Bill 21 - An Act respecting the laicity of the State.

In July 2019, Victoria joined Brampton, Ontario in condemning Quebec's ban of religious symbols at work, and many Canadian municipalities to support the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM), the World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO) and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) in their legal challenge against Bill 21 in Quebec.

Since then, cities across Canada have been demonstrating leadership with the cities of Brampton and Toronto each pledging \$100,000 to support the legal challenges brought forward by the NCCM, WSO, and CCLA. The cities of Calgary, London, Mississauga and Winnipeg have opposed Bill 21 and are considering financial aid as well. Brampton's Mayor Patrick Brown has also issued an appeal to 100 Canadian Mayors to join the Brampton City Council in the fight against Quebec's Bill 21.

Victoria Council values the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; and believes we cannot allow the defense of the Charter and the foundational value of religious freedom to be on the backs of racialized communities against the Province of Quebec with unlimited legal resources. Additionally, a Supreme Court decision allowing the infringement of religious freedom would have negative consequences for Victorians and all Canadians.

Therefore, Victoria City Council has authorized funding of \$9500, based on a contribution of 10 cents per capita from the 2022 contingency, to the joint legal challenges of Bill 21 by National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM), the World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO) and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA).

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*"The City of Victoria recognizes the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations in whose traditional territories we live and work "Hay swx qa"*

THE CITY OF VICTORIA



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Please see the attached Appendix for a copy of the Council Member Motion which was approved on January 6, 2022 Council. We invite all those copied to share this letter with their members and to support the legal challenge.

Sincerely,

Lisa Helps  
Victoria Mayor

Cc:            Union of British Columbia Municipalities  
                Federation of Canadian Municipalities  
                Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities  
                Capital Regional District  
                Members of Parliament that represent British Columbia  
                Members of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia

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