

Bill C-51 cannot be salvaged; it must be scrapped

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P., Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

April 13, 2015

Dear Prime Minister,

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, call for the immediate and unconditional dismissal of [Bill C-51: Anti-Terrorism Act, 2015](#). We are extremely concerned by the potential impact of this legislation, which fails to strike the balance between protecting Canadians and safeguarding our cherished rights and freedoms as protected in the Charter.

Bill C-51 has been widely criticized by experts and Canadians across the country as being irresponsible, dangerous, and ineffective. This law will detrimentally impact our social frameworks, democratic values and fundamental rights. Our security agencies currently possess wide-ranging powers to address security threats, and the need for this broad legislation has not been demonstrated. While minor amendments to the bill have been suggested, amendments cannot repair such an extensive and dangerous piece of legislation.

As Canadians learn more about and better understand the bill, their concern for its contents and potential impact continues to grow. The bill's consultation process has been incredibly hasty, not even allowing for our own Privacy Commissioner to speak to the potential impact that this broad legislation could have. Legislation that could in any way affect our rights and freedoms cannot be created in such a rushed manner. Canadians must be consulted, and expert recommendations and criticism must be factored into shaping the country's policies.

We agree with the over 179,000 Canadians who have called on the government to scrap this irresponsible, dangerous and ineffective legislation through StopC51.ca and other petitions. Bill C-51 is fundamentally flawed and the proposed amendments do little to mitigate the erosion of our rights and freedoms if it is passed into law. We write to you requesting that the federal government listen to the wishes of the majority of Canadians, and withdraw this piece of legislation. We will not be pressured or scared into sacrificing our rights and freedoms.

Yours sincerely,

Amnesty Canada

Avaaz

BC Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA)

BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association (FIPA)

Canadian Association of Professional Employees / Association canadienne des employés
professionnels

Canadian Civil Liberties Association

Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE)

Centre for Law and Democracy

Centre for Free Expression, Ryerson University

Consumers' Association of Alberta

CWA/SCA Canada
Electronic Frontier Foundation
Free Dominion
Greenpeace Canada
Institute for the Study of Privacy Issues (ISPI)
International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group (ICLMG)
Leadnow
National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM)
OpenMedia
PEN Canada
Pirate Party of Canada
Privacy & Access Council of Canada
Privacy International
Public Service Alliance of Canada, BC Region
Real Art Gaining Strength
Right to Know Coalition of Nova Scotia (RTKNS)
Samuelson-Glushko Canadian Internet Policy & Public Interest Clinic (CIPPIC)
Telecommunities Canada
Youth Vote Canada

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Cc: The Honourable Steven Blaney, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
The Honourable Thomas Mulcair, Leader of the Official Opposition
Mr. Justin Trudeau, Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada
Mr. Mario Beaulieu, Leader of the Bloc Québécois
Ms. Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party of Canada
Mr. Daniel Therrien, Privacy Commissioner of Canada