

Dear Prime Minister/Minister Hajdu,

Re. Changes to the Canada Summer Jobs Grant Program

We the undersigned leaders of diverse faith communities and organizations in Canada, call on the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada to amend the Canada Summer Jobs guidelines and application process so that it does not compel agreement or belief, and allows religious organizations to stay true to their communal identity and beliefs. The new application requires each organization to give non-negotiable and unqualified affirmation of certain beliefs held by the current government.

Canada has a long history of cooperation and collaboration between religious organizations and governments in our health care and social welfare systems, and in many other areas of life.

Faith-based organizations wish to continue to partner with the federal government in delivering programming and services to vulnerable members of their local communities, including children and youth, newcomers to Canada, and people experiencing poverty and homelessness.

However, with the changes to the Canada Summer Jobs guidelines, many organizations will be deemed ineligible because they are unable or unwilling to attest that their “core mandate” and beliefs align with the current government’s position. These groups are being denied equal access to a government benefit solely because of their religious beliefs or conscientious objection.

In managing its programs, the government should respect and accommodate the diversity of values and beliefs within Canadian society and must itself abide by the *Charter* in its treatment of individuals and groups. The fundamental freedoms of conscience and religion, thought, belief, opinion and expression, as guaranteed in the *Charter*, must be respected and affirmed in legislation, regulations and policy.

The promise of a free and democratic society is that there be no religious or ideological tests or conditions to receiving government benefits or protection.

The changes to the Canada Summer Jobs guidelines and application not only violate the fundamental freedoms of faith-based organizations, they also significantly impact the broader communities served by their programs, often the most vulnerable in Canadian society.

Canada is known and widely respected as a religiously plural and multicultural society. Respect for the diversity of beliefs of all Canadians and meaningful engagement with those who hold differing beliefs is

essential to maintaining a robust democracy. Please ensure that Canadians continue to benefit from collaboration between governments and faith-based organizations working together for the common good of our country.

Sincerely,

Dave Addison, Executive Director
Toronto City Mission

Rev. Tim McCoy, Executive Minister
Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec

Rabea Allos
Canadian Middle Eastern Christian Congress

Dr. Stephen W. Martin, Associate Professor of Theology
The King's University

Adriana Bara, Executive Director
Canadian Centre for Ecumenism

Kevin McKay, President
Partners International Canada

Mr. Kerry Belt, President
Rocky Mountain College

Rev. Paul J. McPhail, General Secretary
Independent Assemblies of God International (Canada)

James Beerley, DCD, President
Crossworld Canada

Rev. Wesley Mills, President
Apostolic Church of Pentecost of Canada Inc.

Rev. Dr. Andrew Bennett
Director, Cardus Law

H.G. Anba Mina, Bishop of
Mississauga, Vancouver and Western Canada
The Coptic Orthodox Church in Canada

Father Daniel Bessada
St. Mary and St. John the Beloved
Coptic Orthodox Church

Dr. Lawson Murray, President
Scripture Union Canada

J.Bryan Born, DTh, President
Columbia Bible College

Dr. Mouhammad Iqbal Nadvi, Chair
Canadian Council of Imams

Wes Carlisle, BA, CPA, Board Chair
Director of Administration
Northwind Family Ministries

Rev. Robert Ogilvie, Executive Minister
Canadian Baptists of Western Canada

Jim Caruso, DMin., Lead Pastor
Richmond Pentecostal Church

Michael B. Pawelke, DMin, President
Briercrest College & Seminary

Bruce J. Clemenger, President
The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

Rev. John Pellowe, MBA, DMin, Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Council of Christian Charities

Cardinal Thomas Collins
Archbishop of Toronto

Rabbi Reuben Poupko
Congregation Beth Israel Beth Aharon, Montreal
Executive Member, Canadian Rabbinic Caucus

Bren Cressman, Policy, Media & Research Analyst
Messianic Vision Canada

Rabbinical Council of America

John G. Denbok, Executive Director
SIM Canada

Kervin Raugust, President
Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada

Eric Derksen, President
Vanguard College

Rev. Rick Reed, President
Heritage College & Seminary

Maureen Dinner, MA, Executive Director
The Pregnancy Centre

Geri Rodman, President
Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship of Canada

Davide DiSabatino, Lead Pastor
Church in the Hills

Rev. Dr. Darren Roorda, Canadian Ministries Director
Christian Reformed Church in North America

Tim Dyck, General Secretary
Evangelical Mennonite Conference

Derek B.M. Ross, LL.B, LL.M., Executive Director &
General Counsel
Christian Legal Fellowship

Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education & Action

Dr. Stephen Roy, President & Dean
Immanuel Bible College

Evangel Chapel
Fort St. John, British Columbia

The Very Reverend Angelos Saad
Church of V. Mary and St. Athanasius
Coptic Orthodox Church

Steve Falkiner, President
Foursquare Gospel Church of Canada

Bruce Fawcett, Ph.D.
President and Vice Chancellor
Crandall University

Cliff Fletcher, Bishop
The Free Methodist Church in Canada

John Friesen, CEO
Muskoka Bible Centre

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl
Beth Tzedec Congregation, Toronto
Executive Member, Canadian Rabbinic Caucus

The Most Reverend Lionel Gendron, P.S.S.
Bishop of Saint-Jean Longueuil
President, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

Rev. Len Goddard, President
Community Christian Fellowship Church of Canada

Graham Greenwood, Executive Pastor
Mill Woods Assembly

Randolph Haluza-DeLay, PhD, Sociology
The King's University

Rev. David Hearn, President
The Christian & Missionary Alliance in Canada

Rev. Dr. David Schrader
National Pastor
Congregational Christian Churches in Canada

Rev. Lance Schubert, President
Nipawin Bible College

André Schutten, HonB.A., LL.B., LL.M.
Legal Counsel & Director of Law and Policy
Association for Reformed Political Action

Imam Ilyas Sidyot
The Islamic Association of Saskatchewan Saskatoon Inc.

Dan Slade, International Director
Partners in Harvest

His Eminence Metropolitan Archbishop Sotirios Primate,
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto & All Canada

Terry Smith, Executive Director
Canadian Baptist Ministries

His Excellency Bishop Bawai Soro
Chaldean Eparchy of Mar Addai

Michael Stone, Lead Pastor
Crossroads Community Church

Philippe Straforelli, Director
Christian Life Assembly

His Grace Bishop Abgar Hovakimian
Primate of the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church,
Diocese of Canada

Rabbi Chaim Strauchler
Shaarei Shomayim Congregation

Don Huston, MC, RCC, Lead Pastor
Julia Street Community Church

Gerry Taillon, National Ministry Leader
Canadian National Baptist Convention

Rabbi Jonathan Infeld
Congregation Beth Israel, Vancouver
Executive Member, Canadian Rabbinic Caucus

Bill Taylor, Executive Director
Evangelical Free Church of Canada

Rev. Richard Janes, President
Master's College & Seminary

Mr. Hani Tawfilis, Community Leader
Coptic Orthodox Community in Canada

Archbishop Shane B. Janzen
The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada (TAC)

Rev. Timothy Teuscher, President
Lutheran Church-Canada

Wayne Johnson, President & CEO
Tearfund Canada

Vaad Harabanim of Toronto

Rabbi Daniel Korobkin
BAYT – Thornhill

Dr. Jason Van Vliet, Principal
Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary

Craig Kraft, Executive Director
Outreach Canada

Fred Verwoerd, CPA, CMA, Interim President
Redeemer University College

Hubert Krygsman, Executive Director
Global Scholars Canada

Ray Wall, President/Superintendent
Evangelical Covenant Church of Canada

Ronald A. Kuipers, President
Institute for Christian Studies

Rev. Gary Walsh, Executive Director
Wesley Acres

Rabbi Debra Landsberg
Temple Emanu-El, Toronto
Executive Member, Canadian Rabbinic Caucus

Rev. David Wells, General Superintendent
The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada

Laura Lewis, MD, CCFP, Executive Director
Canadian Association of Pregnancy Support Services

Rev. Simon Wong, General Director
Association of Christian Evangelical Ministries (Canada)

Dr. Michel MacDonald, Executive Director
Catholic Organization for Life and Family

His Eminence Metropolitan YURIJ
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

Waldie Neufeld, President
The Peace River Bible Institute

Rev. Michael Zabiran
Worship and Community Life Pastor
Sanctuary Church, Edmonton