



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-01691**

BY: **MR. BEZAN (SELKIRK-INTERLAKE-EASTMAN)**

DATE: **SEPTEMBER 28, 2017**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **HONOURABLE JODY WILSON-RAYBOULD**

Response by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees basic rights and freedoms that are essential to maintaining a free and democratic society. These rights and freedoms are typically written in very general terms. They include freedom of conscience and religion and equality rights.

In its application, the Charter ensures that the state and its institutions maintain a religiously neutral public space that is free from coercion, pressure, and judgment on the part of public authorities in matters of religion. Government cannot use its powers to impose a religious belief or to compel the observance of a religious practice. A provision of a statute, of regulations, or of a by-law will be inoperative if its purpose is religious: the legislative objective cannot be to impose or favour, or to express or profess, one belief to the exclusion of all others. Moreover, the Charter ensures that every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination based on religion and other grounds. Thus the Charter's rights and freedoms preserve a secular, multicultural, and democratic society with a commitment to dignity, diversity, equality, and human rights..