



CMPAC Statement on Bill C-9 Advancing Through the Justice Committee

Thursday March 12 - The Canadian Muslim Public Affairs Council (CMPAC) is deeply concerned by the manner in which Bill C-9, the Combatting Hate Act, has been pushed through the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights without sufficient debate or proper deliberation. As a result, a bill with serious consequences for religious freedoms and civil liberties is being rushed in parliament.

Despite months of pushback from faith leaders, civil liberties organizations, and legal experts, the government has moved the legislation forward by passing it through the committee and to parliament without meaningfully addressing the substantive concerns raised by Muslim communities and other stakeholders.

The bill in its current form raises several significant concerns including the absence of certain prosecutorial safeguards, the introduction of vague offences related to “intimidation” and “obstruction,” and an expanded scope that extends beyond places of worship. Such provisions risk creating uncertainty around religious and cultural expression and may invite uneven enforcement. The legislation continues to retain the implications of the Bloc Québécois’ amendment removing the “good-faith” religious-text defence, while offering only minimal adjustments that fail to resolve the core concerns raised by affected communities. The bill also introduces new criminal offences and expands law enforcement powers in ways that raise broader civil liberties concerns. **As a result, the fundamental issues with the bill remain unaddressed.**

CMPAC and the broader Canadian Muslim community unequivocally support the protection and sanctity of places of worship. Our communities understand the devastating consequences of violence against faith spaces all too well, most tragically through the 2017 Quebec City mosque attack, which remains a painful reminder of the real dangers religious communities face in Canada. However, this bill represents the wrong approach to combating hate. As the Canadian Civil Liberties Association [noted](#), “Bill C-9 doesn’t solve this complex issue. Instead, it hands the government a blunt instrument that history tells us will be turned against the very people it’s supposed to help.”

The decision to move Bill C-9 forward in its current form risks further eroding trust between the federal government and Muslim communities across Canada. The outcome of the committee process sends a troubling signal that the concerns of the Muslim community were not taken seriously.

Legislation introduced in the name of protecting communities must be crafted with those communities, not advanced in a manner that sidelines their concerns.

As Bill C-9 now advances to Parliament, **CMPAC calls on Members of Parliament to acknowledge the outstanding concerns raised by faith communities and civil liberties experts and vote against Bill C-9 at third reading.**

About CMPAC

The Canadian Muslim Public Affairs Council (CMPAC) is a national advocacy organization that fights structural Islamophobia through research, mobilizing communities, engaging decision makers, and influencing public policy.

For further comments, please contact us at media@canadianmuslimpac.ca