

January 25, 2018

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

Rabea Allos  
Canadian Middle Eastern Christian Congress

Adriana Bara, Executive Director  
Canadian Centre for Ecumenism

Mr. Kerry Belt  
President  
Rocky Mountain College

James Beerley, DCD, President  
Crossworld Canada

Rev. Dr. Andrew Bennett  
Director, Cardus Law

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

J.Bryan Born, DTh, President  
Columbia Bible College

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

Jim Caruso, DMin., Lead Pastor  
Richmond Pentecostal Church

Bruce J. Clemenger  
President  
The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

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

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

Kevin McKay, President  
Partners International Canada

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

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

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

Dr. Lawson Murray, President  
Scripture Union Canada

Dr. Mouhammad Iqbal Nadvi, Chair  
Canadian Council of Imams

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

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

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

Cardinal Thomas Collins  
Archbishop of Toronto

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

John G. Denbok, Executive Director  
SIM Canada

Eric Derksen, President  
Vanguard College

Maureen Dinner, MA, Executive Director  
The Pregnancy Centre

Davide DiSabatino, Lead Pastor  
Church in the Hills

Tim Dyck, General Secretary  
Evangelical Mennonite Conference

Edmonton Interfaith Centre for  
Education & Action

Evangel Chapel  
Fort St. John, British Columbia

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

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

Rabbinical Council of America

Kervin Raugust, President  
Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada

Rev. Rick Reed, President  
Heritage College & Seminary

Geri Rodman, President  
Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship of Canada

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

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

Dr. Stephen Roy, President & Dean  
Immanuel Bible College

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rabbi Chaim Strauchler  
Shaarei Shomayim Congregation

Gerry Taillon, National Ministry Leader  
Canadian National Baptist Convention

Bill Taylor, Executive Director  
Evangelical Free Church of Canada

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

Rev. Timothy Teuscher, President  
Lutheran Church-Canada

Wayne Johnson, President & CEO  
Tearfund Canada

Rabbi Daniel Korobkin  
BAYT – Thornhill

Craig Kraft, Executive Director  
Outreach Canada

Hubert Krygsman, Executive Director  
Global Scholars Canada

Ronald A. Kuipers, President  
Institute for Christian Studies

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

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

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

Vaad Harabanim of Toronto

Dr. Jason Van Vliet, Principal  
Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary

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

Ray Wall, President/Superintendent  
Evangelical Covenant Church of Canada

Rev. Gary Walsh, Executive Director  
Wesley Acres

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

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

His Eminence Metropolitan YURIJ  
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

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