



Canada's Proposed Gender Identity Bill Could Restrict Free Speech

The Canadian Parliament is considering a "gender identity" bill, C-16, that could have dangerous free speech implications. The bill seeks to add "gender identity and gender expression" to Canada's protected classes listed in the Canadian Human Rights Act, but opponents of the measure fear it will force those who consider gender dysphoria a mental illness to remain silent on the issue.

The summary of the bill, which is currently being considered in a committee in the Canadian Senate, states that the bill "amends the Criminal Code to extend the protection against hate propaganda set out in that Act to any section of the public that is distinguished by gender identity or expression and to clearly set out that evidence that an offence was motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on gender identity or expression constitutes an aggravating circumstance that a court must take into consideration when it imposes a sentence."

The bill passed the House of Commons in November 2016 but has been delayed in the Senate, prompting its sponsor, Senator Grant Mitchell, to invoke claims of injustice. "It's been eight years," he declared. "It's way past due; this is a human rights issue, and every day that it's not passed is a day that injustice is perpetrated."

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But the bill has some staunch opposition. The Blaze reports that conservatives in Canada have voiced concerns that, if passed, the bill could restrict the rights of those who do not believe that transgenderism should be promoted.

Canadian pastor Paul Dirks observed, "The problem we find with Bill C-16 is that because gender is undefinable, it obligatorily pits gender rights against sex rights. Unlike most other human rights, the inclusion of gender identity and expression rights means the exclusion of other rights."

Harold Albrecht, a Conservative Party member of Parliament from Kitchener, Ontario, has been an outspoken opponent of the bill, asserting that it could potentially stifle even debate on the subject of gender identity issues.

"I am concerned that this bill would cause fear for many Canadians," he said on the floor of Parliament, "fear that they would not be able to even discuss public policy issues, such as this one, on which they





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may disagree with the government-imposed agenda.”

Unfortunately, it seems that political discourse on the subject has already been stifled by those on the left in Canada.

Professor Jordan Peterson of the University of Toronto, an outspoken opponent of so-called social justice initiatives, political correctness, and, most notably, C-16, was denied research funding for the first time in his career, according to his March 31 tweet. He believes that the funding was denied because of his opposition to C-16.

“Free speech is the mechanism by which we keep our society functioning,” said Peterson last fall to a group of students. “With Bill C-16 and its surrounding legislation, it’s the first time I’ve seen in our legislative history where people are attempting to make us speak their language.”

Albrecht also indicated that gender identity and gender expression are far too “subjective to be used in the context of legal documents, particularly in the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Criminal Code of Canada.” After all, there is [no science](#) to support the notion that gender identity is separate from biological sex.

Albrecht noted that the government should not transform policy when it pertains to something on which it knows and understands very little, as doing so could cause irreparable harm, particularly to children.

“Finally,” he added, “I am concerned that when government adopts dramatic changes to public policy as it relates to gender identity and sexuality, with minimal research or support, the results could be harmful for all members of society, but especially for those we are actually trying to help; that is, transgendered children or youth.”

In fact, according to a study by former Chief of Psychiatry at Johns Hopkins Hospital and Distinguished Service Professor of Psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University Dr. Paul McHugh and Arizona State University Professor of Statistics and Biostatistics Lawrence Mayer, accepting and promoting transgenderism as anything other than mental illness can cause substantial harm to children.

McHuge and Mayer took issue with the ways in which transgenderism is being foisted on America’s youth, noting that most children outgrow gender confusion, and efforts to advocate transgender acceptance are sure to create further confusion. “Children are a special case when addressing transgender issues. Only a minority of children who experience cross-gender identification will continue to do so into adolescence or adulthood,” the report stated.

“There is little scientific evidence for the therapeutic value of interventions that delay puberty or modify the secondary sex characteristics of adolescents, although some children may have improved psychological well-being if they are encouraged and supported in their cross-gender identification,” wrote the researchers. “There is no evidence that all children who express gender-atypical thoughts or behavior should be encouraged to become transgender.”

But the Left claims to advocate for science only if the science works in favor of its agenda.

Other concerns cited against the Canadian bill mirror the sentiments voiced in the United States against transgender bathroom bills.

“We’ve heard much talk about ‘bathroom bills,’ but Bill C-16 will apply to showers, locker-rooms, rape shelters, and kid’s camp cabins as well,” wrote Dirks. “Up until now, at least under federal law, women have had the right to privacy in sex-segregated spaces when they are unclothed and feel vulnerable. Most women I know would not feel comfortable in a shower naked with a strange male (even if they



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identified as a woman).”

Some lawmakers have also insisted that the bill would impose too much burden on the taxpayers, Canada’s *Daily Xtra* reports.

Conservative Senator Lynn Beyak said C-16 would increase taxes to fund lawsuits and public-awareness campaigns and would compel businesses to buy new bathroom signs.

“There [are] simply not enough taxpayers in our nation to pay for everyone’s preference or choice,” Beyak said.

Beyak also stated that the bill involves a topic that is far too personal to be handled by the government but instead should be addressed by local governments.

“We do things differently in Rainy River than they do in Vancouver or Montreal, and we certainly know our needs much better than folks in Ottawa or Toronto,” Beyak declared, adding that “sex education is better left to parents” than to the Parliament.

Beyak noted that radicals in the homosexual community are radicalizing the “gay” movement, and praised John McKellar, a ‘90s activist who founded Homosexuals Opposed to Pride Extremism.

“My other gay friends” agree, Beyak said, that “by living in quiet dignity, they have never had to face any kind of discrimination or uncomfortable feelings.”

The future of C-16 remains uncertain, but the Senate committee has invited the justice minister to testify on the bill in the first week of April, to be followed by testimonies from experts, human rights lawyers, psychologists, and activists who support and who oppose the legislation.



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