

BRITISH COLUMBIA HUMANIST ASSOCIATION

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Dear Prime Minister

On behalf of the 542 individuals who signed our petition¹, we're writing in support of your government's decision to ensure recipients of Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) funding recognize and uphold human rights of all Canadians.

Thirty years ago, Canada's abortion laws were struck down when the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of Humanist Henry Morgentaler. Since then, the choice to have an abortion has remained between a patient and their doctor. Similarly, the rights of gay, lesbian and bisexual Canadians gained widespread public and legal recognition through the 1990s and early 2000s and protections for transgender Canadians have been enshrined in the past few years. Finally, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in *Carter* that Canadians in suffering have the right to choose an assisted death.

Despite these victories, there remain organized efforts to rollback these rights and, as the Hon Patty Hadju has noted, some of those organizations have been funded through CSJ.

As part of Canada's and our own commitments to freedom of expression and conscience, we support the right of these organizations to exist and to hold and express their positions. That right should not be confused with an entitlement to government support. In line with the Supreme Court of Canada's ruling in *MLQ v Saguenay (2015)*, we would argue the government ought to go further in its duty of religious neutrality and exclude all groups that promote (or oppose) religion from receiving public funds.

In the meantime, the new CSJ requirements are reasonable and laudable.

Yours sincerely

Ian Bushfield
Executive Director

¹ Attached & available online at http://www.bchumanist.ca/no_funding_for_anti_choice_groups