

Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA) Canada: January – 2017

Quick Updates:

- ◆ Our first ever **Youth** edition of our signature God & Government conference will be held in Ottawa in May. Applications are open to any grade 11 or 12 students attending a Reformed church in Canada. The application deadline is **February 9**. Visit ARPACanada.ca/ggy2017 or email Hannah@ARPACanada.ca for details.
- ◆ Bill S-206, an anti-spanking bill, will, if passed, remove a provision of the Criminal Code (section 43) that permits parents to use limited physical force for disciplinary purposes. More information on this bill can be found at ARPACanada.ca/bill-s-206.
- ◆ Bill C-277 (palliative care) has been rescheduled for second reading debate when Parliament sits at the end of the month. Please continue to interact with your MPs and ask them to support this important bill. For more information, visit ARPACanada.ca/palliative-care.

FIPPA Court Hearing

WeNeedA^{LAW}'s Ontario Stop Censorship tour had its ninth and final stop in Windsor, Ontario on Monday. We are grateful for the opportunity we had to meet with so many supporters, to develop new relationships and to spread the word about our important court case to stop Ontario from censoring all abortion statistics.

Thank you to all who came to an event and committed to taking action! The goal of the tour was to bring awareness to the censorship provision in FIPPA (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act) and how the Ontario government refuses to repeal it. That is why, together with pro-life blogger Pat Maloney, we launched a constitutional challenge against the Government of Ontario for hiding abortion statistics. On February 1, we will be presenting our case before the Ontario Superior Court in Ottawa. There is still a chance to get involved! You can:

- 1) Send an email to your Ontario MPP using our SimpleMail tool (Simple.ARPACanada.ca).
- 2) Send a hand-written letter to your MPP asking them to support the removal of Section 65 from FIPPA, which restricts access to abortion statistics.
- 3) Follow our social media (just search for "ARPA Canada" and "We Need a Law" on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram) to stay up to date on the developments of this case.

Ontario's Family Law Revolution Continues

A new bill in Ontario will (if passed) replace the *Child and Family Services Act*. Bill 89 seeks to require child protection, foster, and adoption service providers and judges to consider and respect a child's "race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, family diversity, disability, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression." Phew! That's quite the laundry list. But what's wrong with it?

Well, the "religious faith, if any, in which the child is being raised" is removed from the law as a matter to be considered. The above long list of factors takes its place. So where the State needs to interfere and remove a child, the religious faith the child is raised in is diminished as a factor. And when it comes to who can foster or adopt children, not all parents will be considered equal – particularly those who reject gender ideology. There are huge implications for Christian families! For example, can the state now remove a child from a Christian home if the parents refuse to affirm their gender confusion? More information on this can be found at ARPACanada.ca/bill-89.

Bill 89 passed first reading in December, 2016. The Ontario legislature is not in session until late February. That gives us some time to raise awareness about this bill and to ask our MPPs what they intend to do about it. Please take the time to send your MPP a letter expressing your concerns about Bill 89. We have three draft EasyMails (available at Easy.ARPACanada.ca) to get you started. As always, edit them as you like and please be respectful.

Ready, set, ACTION!

Visit the "Take Action" page on our website (ARPACanada.ca/take-action) to stay up to date on current action items and to find out how you can get involved at a grassroots level!

Bill C-16 (Transgenderism) Action Plan

If passed, Bill C-16 will amend the *Canadian Human Rights Act* to outlaw discrimination on the basis of “gender identity” and “gender expression.”

As Christians, we must be fair, honest, and kind in our dealings with all our neighbours, employees, customers, and tenants. We can protect people, including individuals who struggle with their gender identity, from bullying, harassment, and violence without embedding contentious, unscientific, “progressive” gender ideology in law. In fact, we can love and help our transgender neighbours better without this law.

This bill is two steps away from becoming law. We have draft EasyMails (available at Easy.ARPACanada.ca) with which you can contact the Senators representing your province. We also have an audio tutorial available on our website on how to interact with your MP or MLA/MPP’s office when contacting them about this bill. Take action this week!

Ending Suffering: The Palliative Alternative

For those with a serious or terminal illness or disability, Canadian courts, law makers and culture say there are only two options: a slow, painful death, or a quick, easy assisted suicide (which is now legal in Canada for the severely ill).

But there is a third, often overlooked, option! Stay tuned for an exclusive ARPA Canada documentary where we investigate the palliative alternative to ending suffering and why Canadians should be choosing it.

Restorative Justice Lobbying

When Parliament resumes at the end of January, ARPA will begin lobbying for restorative justice reforms, building on our latest policy report. ARPA believes restorative justice principles, rooted in Scripture, should guide reform of the Canadian justice system. As the late Chuck Colson said,

“A system of true justice... holds individuals responsible for their actions... under an objective rule of law, but always in the context of community and always with the chance of transformation of the individual and healing of fractured relationships and of the moral order.”

Justice is not only about retribution or financial recompense. It is about people in a community, governed by the rule of law, seeking to build *shalom* in human relationships.

Some of our recommendations to parliamentarians will include:

- 1) Encouraging the government to work with civil institutions to help prevent crime and to help both young and old offenders reintegrate into society.
- 2) Section 718.2(e) of the *Criminal Code* should be amended to read “*all available sanctions that are reasonable in the circumstances should be ~~considered~~ prioritized above imprisonment for all offenders.*”
- 3) Conditional sentences should be used more frequently, allowing the offender to maintain work, support family members, pay restitution and remain active in society making reintegration more likely.
- 4) The Department of Justice should conduct a thorough review of mandatory minimum sentencing provisions in the *Criminal Code*.
- 5) The *Criminal Code* should be amended to require judges to consider **restitution** in all appropriate cases.

For access to this policy report and our complete list of recommendations, please visit ARPACanada.ca/publications.

“He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” ~ Micah 6:8 ~

DONATION REQUEST

Do you have an indoor flag pole and Canadian flag in good condition that you don’t use? ARPA would gladly display it in our new Ottawa office!

Please contact Hannah at Hannah@ARPACanada.ca.

Praise & Prayer

Everything we do is to be done to the honour and glory of God. We encourage you to join us in prayer as we carry out our mission.

PRAISE:

- For keeping our staff safe while travelling for the Stop Censorship tour.
- For all of those who have responded to our calls to action by sending emails, calling MPs and MPPs or MLAs, and sharing our content on social media.

PRAYER:

- For our Members of Parliament and provincial representatives who will return to their offices at the end of this month.
- That the judge who hears our FIPPA case on February 1 may be receptive, just, and fair.