

MPP Sheref Sabawy  
40-4181 Sladeview Cres.,  
Mississauga, ON,  
L5L 5R2



## **Bill 42: Ontario Religious Freedom Day Act, 2021**

Dear MPP Sabawy,

Thank you for introducing Bill 42, the *Ontario Religious Freedom Day Act*. I wish to express ARPA Canada's full support for the legislation. Religious freedom is one of Canada's fundamental freedoms, enshrined in section 2(a) of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and should be supported by all Canadians and respected by all levels of government. We are pleased to see recognition of the importance of religious freedom in Bill 42.

### **Background**

ARPA Canada is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating, equipping, and encouraging Christians to political action and to bring a biblical perspective to our civil authorities. We care deeply about religious freedom, not only for Christians, but for all Canadians. One of ARPA Canada's core principles is human liberty, which includes fundamental freedoms such as freedom of religion. This freedom, like the other fundamental freedoms, is God-given, not State-given, requiring vigorous defence by our civil governments. This issue is one that we seek to encourage and advance from both a policy and a grassroots perspective.

### **Bill 42**

Although Bill 42 simply recognizes a day for religious freedom and asks the Minister to consider creating a monument for victims of religious persecution, religious freedom remains an important principle to encourage throughout our province. The bill's broader purpose of remembering instances where religious freedom has been violated, reflecting on the importance of this fundamental freedom, and respecting religious freedom in Ontario and beyond, is important to maintain a society where Ontarians can practice their faith without interference by the civil government.

### **Support**

ARPA Canada supports Bill 42 for multiple reasons. Freedom of religion remains a key area of focus for our organization and an ongoing concern of the thousands of Ontarians who make up our constituency. Bill 42 recognizes the value of religious freedom as a fundamental freedom which is critical to allowing a society like ours to flourish. To be human is to be religious. Thus, freedom of religion is not merely a civic or political good; it goes to the core of what it means to be human and is therefore quintessentially a *human* right.

Once again, we want to thank you for introducing Bill 42, and we hope to see it studied at the Standing Committee on Social Policy and passed at 3<sup>rd</sup> reading in the very near future.

On behalf of ARPA Canada,



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