

I am writing today to express my deep concern surrounding the proposal of Bill C-63. While it is certainly incredibly important that we protect our children from predators, both online and in person, it seems that this bill is more about silencing Canadians than it is about creating a safer Canada for our children.

The Government of Canada website states that “hatred” involved detestation or vilification. These terms are quite subjective.

Many women in Canada have made it clear that we intend to fight for our sex-based rights. We must be able to speak openly and truthfully about the reality that men can not become women. We must be able to discuss the fact that Bill C16 threw the door wide open for predators to gain access to vulnerable women and girls, and that countless predators have taken advantage of this opportunity. We must be able to discuss the fact that nearly half of all trans-identifying males who are incarcerated not only in Canada, but in the UK, New Zealand, and the US, have histories of sexually offending. Canadian data shows that trans-identified male inmates are more than 3 times as likely as other incarcerated males to commit sex offenses. Would sharing this information with the intent to spread awareness of the need for single-sex spaces for females constitute vilification? Would sharing content advocating for single-sex spaces for females be considered hate speech based on “gender identity” being a protected characteristic?

In addition to the very subjective definition of hate speech and hate crime, the bill imposes steep punishments for such offenses, up to and including prison time. When questioned in the House of Commons about whether or not this bill would see innocent people go to prison, Liberal MPs answered that we could trust judges not to be too heavy-handed with their sentencing. It seems that when a person’s freedom is at stake, there should be very clear guidelines written into the legislation to prevent overzealous judges from overreacting to a person expressing their charter rights.

The Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms warned that this bill is “the most aggressive assault on free speech in modern Canadian history.”

Freedom of expression is a hallmark of a healthy, democratic society. In order for this crucial human right to be upheld, it must apply not only to those expressions that one supports, but to those expressions that one vehemently disagrees with, even those that deeply offend. Canada has always been a free country. We must not allow authoritarian legislation to threaten the freedoms we have enjoyed throughout our lives.

Please feel free to express why freedom of speech matters to you, and what your personal concerns are regarding C63. You can use as much or as little of this template as you’d like, or write a letter of your own. Thank you for participating in this campaign.