



Hon. Candice Bergen, P.C.

Member of Parliament for Portage—Lisgar

Députée de Portage—Lisgar

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for writing me in regard to Liberal MP Iqra Khalid's Motion M-103. I always enjoy hearing from my constituents. Your thoughts are appreciated and taken into consideration.

Conservatives are fully committed to freedom of religion and freedom of speech. We condemn, in the strongest of terms, all acts committed against religious communities, including at places of worship. There are over 1 million Muslims in Canada. They are an integral part of our country. They need to feel safe and free to worship and also speak about their faith. That being said, M-103 is focused on a controversial term – “Islamophobia” – which some believe may be used to shut down legitimate debate rather than to encourage it; to intimidate, rather than to inform. We do not support restrictions on legitimate freedom of speech. We strongly support the right to freedom of expression. Concurrent with this view, we will hold a free vote on this motion.

As Official Opposition we recently introduced our own motion which condemns “systemic racism, religious intolerance and discrimination of Muslims, Jews, Christians, Sikhs, Hindus, and other religious communities”, as well as acknowledging the “enshrined rights and freedoms in the Constitution Acts, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Shockingly the Liberals did not support our motion and it was defeated, proving that they introduced this motion purely for political gain. It is very disturbing to see the Liberals being purposely divisive on such an important issue.

In 2012, our previous Conservative Government established the Office of Religious Freedom within the Department of Foreign Affairs. The Office has been at the forefront of the battle to protect freedom of religion and belief internationally, as well as to promote Canadian values of tolerance and pluralism. The Liberal Government shut down the Office of Religious Freedoms shortly after coming into power proving again that they are not serious about promoting tolerance for all religions.

Again thank you for taking the time to write me. If my office can be of any further assistance on this or any other matter, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Hon. Candice Bergen, P.C., M.P.
Opposition House Leader

House of Commons

701 Justice
OTTAWA, ON K1A 0A6
Tel.: 613-995-9511
Fax: 613-947-0313

Constituency

Unit E, 886 Thornhill Street
MORDEN, MB R6M 2E1
Tel.: 204-822-7440
Fax: 204-822-7445

Chambre des communes

701, Justice
OTTAWA (ON) K1A 0A6
Tél. : 613-995-9511
Télééc. : 613-947-0313

Circonscription

Pièce E, 886, rue Thornhill
MORDEN (MB) R6M 2E1
Tél. : 204-822-7440
Télééc. : 204-822-7445