

NIKI ASHTON

MP - Churchill



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RECEIVED MAY 06 2015

Canadian Library Association
1150 Morrison Drive, Suite 400
Ottawa Ontario K2H 8S9
April 28, 2015

Dear Valoree McKay,

Thank you for writing to me regarding Bill C-51: An Act to enact the security of Canada Information Sharing Act and the Secure Air Travel Act, to amend the Criminal Code, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other acts. There is no question that Canada faces real threats from terrorism at home and abroad. It is the responsibility of Parliamentarians to come together and to address such threats with responsible and effective measures that prevent the actions of those who seek to intimidate us and erode our fundamental freedoms.

However, the Conservative government has brought forward a flawed piece of over-reaching legislation that itself erodes civil liberties while failing to protect public safety. Rather than be intimidated in to supporting the government's proposed bill, New Democrats carefully examined Bill C-51 and consulted extensively with stakeholders and our constituents. New Democrats have always firmly believed that we cannot sacrifice the fundamental freedoms that are central to Canadian society in the name of bolstering public safety. We believe we can and must protect both.

New Democrats are calling on the government of Canada to avoid rushing this bill through Parliament and instead hear from experts and concerned Canadians regarding the contents of this bill. We are also calling on the government to include stronger, independent civilian oversight of security and intelligence agencies in addition to appropriate resources for those agencies that were removed by Conservative budget cuts. Public safety agencies should also be working with at-risk communities on counter-radicalization programs, recognizing that this is an effective, community-based approach to avoid potential threats.



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In its current form, Bill C-51 erodes civil liberties while giving increased powers to national security and intelligence agencies without proper and effective civilian oversight. New Democrats believe we can and must protect civil liberties and public safety equally for a prosperous and thriving Canada. Rest assured we will use all of our parliamentary tools to oppose this dangerous and vague bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Niki Ashton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Niki" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Ashton".

Niki Ashton
MP for Churchill

