



Bill 21 Task Force Update (C2022-0416)

March 29, 2022

Cllr Mian, Cllr Spencer, Cllr Dhaliwal

Recommendations

The Bill 21 Task Force recommends that Council:

1) Direct Administration to:

- Create a page on the City of Calgary's website outlining the history of Council's response to Bill 21 and include a link to the joint-legal challenge fundraising campaign by CCLA, NCCM and WSO, when available
- Explore opportunities to strengthen relationships with Calgary's cultural and faith communities and report back to Council by end of Q4 2022; and
- Determine how to better resource the Anti-Racism Action Committee (ARAC) and leverage their collective expertise to respond to emerging priorities in alignment with their Terms of Reference.

2) Disband the Bill 21 Task Force.



A Brief Overview

- In 2019, the Province of Quebec enacted Bill 21, which prohibits public servants from wearing religious symbols including hijabs, turbans, yarmulke, the cross and many others
- In September of 2019, Calgary's City Council passed a resolution condemning Quebec's Bill 21
- In December 2021, The City of Brampton, The City of Toronto and the City of London committed \$100,000 of public money to joint legal challenge of Bill 21 launched by the National Council of Canadian Muslims, Canadian Civil Liberties Association and the World Sikh Organization



Council Direction

That Council convene a task force – led by Councillors Mian, Dhaliwal and Spencer – to engage local legal and religious communities to work with The City of Calgary in creating a coalition that:

- A) identifies how expertise and resources can best be deployed to assist the legal challenge against Quebec’s Bill 21 and/or support local inclusivity initiatives,
- B) enables the ability for existing non-profit organizations to raise funds on behalf of citizens and corporations in Calgary that wish to add their support towards this effort, and,
- C) inform Council if The City of Calgary as a corporation should send public money to a legal challenge in another province.

That the recommendations of the task force described above in point 2 be formalized by the end of Q1 2022 to accommodate a potential further decision of Calgary City Council to consider allocating funding for the legal challenge against Quebec’s Bill 21 and/or in support of local inclusivity efforts.



Two Key Questions

1. Should public money be sent to a legal challenge in another province?
2. How can expertise and resources best be deployed to respond to an emerging issue such as Bill 21?



Should public money be sent to a legal challenge in another province?

Support for the use of public funds	Opposition to the use of public funds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Supreme Court decision that would allow for the infringement of religious freedoms would have negative consequences for all Canadians, which includes Calgarians • Calgary would be joining other municipalities in standing up for Canadian values • Calgary City Council already condemned Bill 21, and committing funds is an appropriate next step • Many of the groups fighting this legal challenge represent minorities and racialized citizens, who shouldn't have to carry the financial burden alone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill 21 does not have enough of a direct impact on Calgarians to warrant the funds • Fear that sending money to legal challenges once would set precedent for future requests of this nature • The money wouldn't be effective in materially changing the outcome of the decision • There are more direct of ways of improving the lives of minorities and racialized citizens within Calgary



Private Fundraising

- No public funds, but facilitate private fundraising
- Met with NCCM, CCLA & WSO
 - Asked them to create a mechanism for private fundraising
 - Post the link, when available



How can expertise and resources best be deployed to respond to emerging issues such as Bill 21?

Cultural & Faith Communities	Anti-Racism Advisory Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong willingness to work together in an interfaith capacity - Deep service work already occurring - Desire for collaboration and relationship building with each other, the City and Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteers with a broad anti-racism mandate - Resources would be required - Desire to strengthen relationship between ARAC and Council

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