

Motion Against Quebec's Bill 21

Council Date: January 19, 2022

Moved By Councillor Pat Saito 

Seconded By Councillor Matt Mahoney

WHEREAS the City of Mississauga is troubled by the removal of a Grade 3 elementary school teacher from her classroom in Chelsea, Quebec recently for wearing a hijab to work.

AND WHEREAS the City of Mississauga denounces Quebec's Bill 21 as discriminatory, offensive and feel it runs contrary to who we are as Canadians and residents of Mississauga. The City of Mississauga embraces and celebrates its diversity and believes in the civil rights and religious freedoms guaranteed to everyone in Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

AND WHEREAS Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM), of which Mississauga is a member, voted unanimously in opposition to Quebec's Bill 21. Further, OBCM calls on all Members of the Parliament to support the challenge of Bill 21 at the Supreme Court.

AND WHEREAS, the City of Mississauga passed Resolution 0229-2019 in October 2019, unanimously approving a motion opposing the Province of Quebec's Bill 21 (An Act Respecting the Laicity of the State) which prohibits public servants from wearing religious symbols including turbans, hijabs, yarmulkes, crosses and many others;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the City of Mississauga passed Resolution 154-2021 in June 2021, 207-2020 in June 2020, which recognizes that discrimination, racism and xenophobia, in particular, Islamophobia and anti-Black racism is a crisis that requires immediate action; and has undertaken actions to address systemic racism and discrimination against ethnic groups, Indigenous Peoples, and Black communities.

AND WHEREAS Cities are closest to the people and those elected to represent them play an important role in advocating on their behalf to ensure their rights and freedoms guaranteed under the Constitution are protected.

AND WHEREAS this City's motion should not be viewed as an attack towards our fellow Quebec leaders but rather a peaceful protest against a misguided law that unfairly infringes on the religious rights of Canadian minorities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The City of Mississauga Council endorse the current legal challenge against the Province of Quebec's Bill 21 - An Act respecting the laicity of the State, an effort that is being led by the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM), the World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO) and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA).
2. The Mayor and Council write a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada and all federal parties urging their support to intervene in the legal challenge at the Quebec Court of Appeal. If the

case moves to the Supreme Court and if an improper decision is made, it would impede upon the advancements we have made on diversity, equity and inclusion for all Canadians.

3. The City of Mississauga continue to invest in supporting local diversity and inclusion initiatives including promoting the existing City grant that will be dedicated to building community capacity on anti-racism/anti-hate in 2022.
4. The City of Mississauga encourage the community to engage in fundraising in support of the legal challenge.