



PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

FEV 21 2020  
FEB 21 2020

*Bonnie*

Dear Mayor Crombie:

Thank you for your letter of November 20, 2019 regarding the opposition of the residents of Mississauga to Quebec's *Act respecting the Laicity of the State*.

Canada is a diverse and inclusive society with vibrant Indigenous communities and heritage. Our country is characterized by linguistic duality and has a long history of immigration and integration.

Under the Canadian Constitution, the Parliament of Canada and the provincial legislatures can enact legislation. In this case, the *Act respecting the Laicity of the State* was adopted by the Legislature of Quebec.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (the Charter) is part of the Constitution of Canada. It applies to all levels of government, including to provinces and territories, to protect individuals against their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Notwithstanding these obligations, Section 33 of the Charter permits the Canadian Parliament and provincial legislatures to declare that a law is valid, even if the law or one of its provisions is seen to not respect certain rights protected in the Charter. This provision can be invoked for up to five years before it must be renewed.

Bonnie Crombie  
Mayor of Mississauga  
30 City Centre Drive  
Mississauga, Ontario  
L5B 3C1

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Canadian courts have the jurisdiction to rule on potential infringements of Canadians' Charter rights and the constitutionality of the Act. Provisions of Quebec's *Act respecting the Laicity of the State* currently are being challenged before the Quebec courts.

I am grateful to you for sharing the views of the residents of Mississauga on this matter.

I am forwarding, for her information, a copy of our exchange of correspondence to: Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.