

December 14, 2025

Pauline Rochefort,
Member of Parliament for Nipissing-Timiskaming
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

**Re: Opposition to the Proposed Amendment to Bill C-9 Regarding Removal of the
“good faith” Religious Text Exemption in the Criminal Code of Canada**

Dear Ms. Rochefort,

I am writing to you as a concerned constituent and a member of the Catholic community in Nipissing-Timiskaming to express my **serious concerns and strong opposition** to the proposed amendment to Bill C-9 that would repeal Criminal Code clause 319(3)(b), which currently safeguards the expression of opinions rooted in Scripture or religious belief made in good faith.

While I firmly reject all forms of hatred and discrimination and support effective measures to combat genuine hate crimes, I believe this specific amendment poses a significant risk to fundamental constitutional freedoms, particularly freedom of expression and religious liberty.

The current "good faith" defence ensures that individuals, including clergy, educators, and laypeople, can express and teach their faith—including quoting religious texts like the Bible—without fear of prosecution for hate speech. Removing this safeguard creates ambiguity and uncertainty, potentially criminalizing legitimate religious teachings and pastoral care. This could lead to a chilling effect on open debate and the public witness of our faith.

As the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has articulated in their letter to the Prime Minister, the existing laws already address violence, threats, and actual harm. This amendment seems redundant for addressing true hate and instead risks being overbroad, allowing for the potential weaponization of laws against people of faith.

I urge you to take a clear stand for religious freedom and support the retention of the "good faith" religious text exemption within Bill C-9. Please advocate within your caucus and the House of Commons for changes that combat genuine hate without undermining the foundational freedoms that allow people of all faiths to flourish in Canada.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. I look forward to hearing your position on this issue and the actions you plan to take.

Sincerely,

Signature

Printed Full Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, Province, Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: _____