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The Canadian Secular Alliance asks the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights to signal its commitment to the principles of human rights for all, regardless of religion, sexual orientation, and gender by refusing to pass C-266: An Act to Establish Pope John Paul II Day.

What is the Canadian Secular Alliance (CSA)?

The Canadian Secular Alliance is a non-profit, public policy research and advocacy organization advancing church-state separation and the neutrality of government in matters of religion. We seek to represent all Canadians, religious and non-religious alike, who believe that the Canadian government should adopt public policies consistent with a secular state.

The CSA believes in church-state separation—the idea that the government of Canada should not favour one religion over others, or religious belief over non-belief. Our commitment is to liberal-democratic principles of equality, fairness and justice for all under the law, regardless of religious belief or lack thereof.

Background

Private Member's Bill C-266: received little attention in the mainstream press. The Canadian public was largely unaware of its existence. However, an online petition asking the Senate of Canada to oppose the bill surpassed 2500 signatures in its first week and has exceeded 3500 signatures to date.

Canadian Secular Alliance Objections to Bill-C266

The designation of a day for Canada to officially recognize Pope John Paul II is inconsistent with the goals and values established and promoted by the Government of Canada.

While John Paul II was a charismatic figure, his record as leader of the Catholic Church is full of scandal and poor management. Barbara Blaine, head of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) group, points out, "In more than 25 years as the most powerful religious figure on the planet, John Paul II did almost nothing to safeguard kids."

Pope John Paul vigorously supported the Catholic Church's opposition to contraception, abortion and homosexuality. He personally intervened to advise Jean Chretien against introducing legislation to allow same-sex marriage. His edicts against condom use undermined worldwide public health efforts to control the spread of AIDS.

For these reasons, the Canadian Secular Alliance asks the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights to refuse to pass Bill C-266, the bill that would establish April 2nd as Pope John Paul II Day in Canada.