



CITIZENS *for* PUBLIC JUSTICE

June 1, 2010

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington St.
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Harper,

I am writing on behalf of Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) to respectfully ask that you and your caucus colleagues support Bill C-304 (“An Act to ensure secure, adequate, accessible and affordable housing for Canadians”). CPJ is a national organization of members inspired by faith to promote justice in Canadian public policy. We encourage citizens, leaders in society and governments to support policies and practices which reflect God’s call for love, justice, and care for creation.

If passed into law, Bill C-304 would “require the Minister responsible for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to consult with the provincial and territorial ministers of the Crown responsible for municipal affairs and housing and with representatives of municipalities, Aboriginal communities, non-profit and private sector housing providers and civil society organizations in order to establish a national housing strategy.” This strategy would guarantee the right to safe, secure, adequate, affordable and accessible housing for all Canadians. As such, it would serve as landmark legislation by providing explicit recognition of the human right to housing, as encoded in international human rights law and ensure a pan-Canadian housing strategy rooted in this human rights framework.

Public justice demands that all people have access to the necessary goods and services to maintain their dignity as human beings. Thus, CPJ strongly supports Bill C-304 and believes that a pan-Canadian housing strategy is a

The CJL Foundation
operating as CPJ.

Charitable registration
89438 3512 RR0001

309 Cooper Street
Suite 501
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 0G5

T 613-232-0275
F 613-232-1275
cpj@cpj.ca
www.cpj.ca

core element of a comprehensive poverty elimination plan.

Until the early 1990s, the federal government had long recognized housing as part of its mandate. Now, Canada is the only major industrialized country without a national housing strategy. Action by the federal government must be scaled up. A pan-Canadian housing strategy, developed with key stakeholders, is critical to strategic, efficient and more effective allocation of resources. The UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing has identified the situation in Canada as “a national housing and homelessness crisis.” This crisis calls out for a visionary, non-partisan response from all orders of government, including the federal government. We therefore respectfully urge you to support Bill C-304.

We hope that you will consider this issue carefully. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Gunn
Executive Director

cc.: Michael Ignatieff, Leader of the Official Opposition
Jack Layton, Leader of the New Democratic Party
Gilles Duceppe, Leader of the Bloc Quebecois
Members of the HUMA Committee