



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CIVIL LIBERTIES ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS *PREVENTION OF TORTURE ACT*

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association is supporting the introduction of the *Prevention of Torture Act* by the NDP's Dawn Black in the House of Commons today.

The *Prevention of Torture Act* would significantly strengthen Canada's protection against torture by:

- making a criminal offence to use information derived by torture
- prohibiting Canadian officials from transferring prisoners to face torture
- creating a watch list of countries known to practice torture to prevent information sharing, extradition and deportation with those countries
- placing a duty on officials to report knowledge of torture
- establishing diplomatic protocols for the immediate repatriation of any Canadian citizen at risk of torture

BCCLA President Rob Holmes: "The BC Civil Liberties Association has actively pressed for Canada and its government officials to consistently adhere to the commitment inherent in our Constitution to respect and protect human dignity and the rule of law, including in international dealings. We have been greatly saddened by failures to do so, with the Maher Arar case being one of the most serious, but not the only one to have occurred. Through our former president, Jason Gratl, the BCCLA proposed in 2006 that Parliament pass an anti-torture law. We are pleased to see progress in that regard with the presentation of this bill by Dawn Black. Ensuring public recognition and understanding of our country's commitment to basic principles of human decency and civilized behavior is of fundamental importance in the world today. That is so as a reminder and guide to our officials and citizens, as a remedy for infractions that may occur in the future, and as an example of leadership to other countries."

The *Prevention of Torture Act* is available at:

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HouseBills/BillsPrivate.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=39&Ses=2>

– 30 –

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