

# Media Violence Coalition

439 University Avenue, Toronto, ON M5G 1Y8

Phone: 416-340-2540 Fax: 416-340-7571

April 16, 2007

<Member of Parliament>

<House of Commons>

<Ottawa, ON K1P 2L2>

Dear <Member of Parliament>:

## Your Vote on Bill C-254 – Protection for Women

On Thursday April 19, 2007, Liberal MP Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre) will re-introduce a motion in the House of Commons requesting all party support for Bill C-254, his Private Member's Bill that adds women to the groups protected under the *Criminal Code* law on hate propaganda. Currently, the law only protects those identified by colour, race, religion, ethnic origin and sexual orientation.

The Media Violence Coalition comprising Ontario school trustees, principals, teachers, students, parents, and police made a public appeal to the Federal Minister of Justice in January of this year to amend the Criminal Code public incitement of hatred laws to conform to Section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, thereby granting protection to girls and women.

Speaking at our recent media conference that drew national coverage, Rhonda Kimberley-Young, past President of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, said: "Public incitement of hatred is acknowledged as a contributing factor in encouraging violence against a target group. **We believe that leaving girls and women off the list compromises their safety.** ... We are adding the voice of the Media Violence Coalition to a long list of individuals and organizations that includes groups as diverse as the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the Special Committee on Pornography and Prostitution, Law Reform Commission of Canada, and James Flaherty, (former) Attorney General of Ontario, among others."

We are calling for all party support to unanimously pass Bill C-254. When it comes to protections for women against hate propaganda, there is a serious gap between the Charter of Rights and the Criminal Code. This is a stark piece of "unfinished business" and one has to seriously wonder why it is taking so long to deal with it. Legislation is rarely a perfect solution but the proposed change to the Criminal Code sends a message that we as a society will no longer tolerate this failure to protect half of our citizens.

We urge you to vote for this bill. If, on the other hand, you object to the proposed legislation, we would appreciate hearing your reasons and any alternatives you suggest.

Sincerely,

Peter Jaffe (Dr.)

Spokesperson

Media Violence Coalition

(Full list of Coalition signatories attached)

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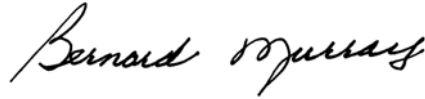
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## Coalition Members



Rick Johnson,  
President (OPSBA)  
Ontario Public School Boards' Association



Bernard Murray,  
President (OCSTA)  
Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association



Emily Noble,  
President (ETFO)  
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario



Ken Coran,  
President (OSSTF)  
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation



Brian Peat,  
President (OFHSA)  
Ontario Federation of Home & School  
Association



Dan Moulton,  
Past President, English Public Board Council  
Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA/AECO)



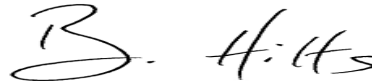
Mark Allen, Manager  
Ontario Provincial Police



Donna Marie Kennedy,  
President (OECTA)  
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association



Ellen Campbell, Executive Director  
Crime Prevention Section  
Canadian Centre for Abuse Awareness



Blair Hilts, President  
Ontario Principals' Council (OPC)