

The EFC is encouraging us to contact members of the Senate in regards to Bill C-9 (Combating Hate Act). While the EFC supports the intent to protect religious sites, it opposes the removal of the "religious belief defence" which threatens religious freedom and sincere faith expressions.

On behalf of our Justice and Mercy (JAM) Team, we would encourage you to call a member of the Senate (preferred) or personalize the message below and send as an email (the second reading could begin as early as April 13th). Here is a script that you can use when you call:

"Hello, my name is [Your Name], and I want to express my concern about Bill C-9. I'm calling to ask [Senator's Name] to vote against or amend Bill C-9, the Combating Hate Act.

I support protecting Canadians from genuine acts of hatred and violence, but I have concerns about the bill in its current form:

- *Bill C-9 removes the long-standing "religious belief defence" in section 319(b) of the Criminal Code that provides protection for statements made in good faith based on sincerely held religious beliefs or sacred texts.*
- *Bill C-9 advanced through Parliament with insufficient consultation and debate.*
- *The changes introduced may create a disturbing effect on legitimate public discussion and religious teaching, causing Canadians to self-censor out of fear that expressing traditional beliefs could lead to complaints, investigations, or legal consequences.*

For these reasons, I would urge you to amend Bill C-9 to restore the religious belief defence or to vote against the bill in its current form. Thank you."

SENATORS from Manitoba:

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