



BURNABY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

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January 12, 2012

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister,

The Burnaby Teachers' Association, a local of the BC Teachers' Federation, wishes to express our profound concerns with the content and process in legislating Bill C-10 in the House of Commons and Senate. We wish to state our opposition as public record to this regressive legislation.

The result of this ideological change to current laws is most likely to be increased costs and taxes to the provinces, budget cuts to existing programs to meet rising court expenses, over-representation of visible minorities and racialization in our prison system, and the relocation of individuals from rural centres to urban centres, leading to further destruction of the family unit.

The true origins of crime in our country are born through inequality, racism, poverty, and insufficient supports for those suffering from mental illness.

A complete failure to address economic deprivation among our First Nations in Canada also contributes substantially to the disproportionate number of Aboriginal peoples in our prison system today.

Republicans in the United States have admitted that similar initiatives in their country have failed and in some cases, led to state-wide financial paralysis. The omnibus crime bill has yet to be properly vetted by committees, to be truly costed and is being driven through the House and Senate despite falling crime rates and opposition from all corners of the country.

If the Senate was created for so called "sober second thought", now is the time to act. We call upon the Senators of all parties to exercise their due diligence and send this broken bill back to the House for proper consultation, costing and legislative amendments as needed.

Teachers in Burnaby and in BC are afraid of the consequences to our nation and our youth should this ill-thought legislation receive royal assent as it stands.

Sincerely,
Members of the Burnaby Teachers' Association