

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bill C-15: Coalition of organizations protests anti-democratic legislation

Bill C-15 threatens the rights of everyone in Canada, including First Nations and future generations, to health and safety, and endangers our natural environments and our legal protections. Bill C-15, *the Act to implement certain provisions of the 2025 Budget*, is an omnibus bill touted as a finance tool. It is anything but.

Buried deep in Bill C-15 are provisions that would allow the government's Ministers to exempt *any* entity from the application of *any* provision of any federal law, other than the Criminal Code. It could apply to projects or activities they consider "encouraging innovation, competitiveness or economic growth", if the Minister is of the *opinion* it is "in the public interest".

Ministers would have radically new discretionary power to decide when and how federal legislation applies, and to whom. But laws should apply equally to all, regardless of status, wealth, or power.

How does this uphold the current government's pre-election platform, which stated "we cannot lose sight of the impact our choices will have on our children and grandchildren; we must always be mindful of long-term sustainability and the kind of economy and environment we want for them"?

"We insist that the federal government withdraw this undemocratic section of the bill", stated Diane Girard, spokesperson for Seniors for Climate Action Now! which spearheaded the coalition. *"We are deeply disturbed by this autocratic move by the Carney government. We can build a strong economy while upholding the standards and laws Canadians fought so hard to create."*

If these provisions of the Bill pass, vital decisions about the economy, people's rights and welfare and the environment can be made behind closed doors, without being subject to any kind of review or possible legal challenge by the public or by Parliament. Ministers could grant exemptions from environmental protection, labour law, access to information and privacy, and safety of food and drugs regulations, to name just a few. They might even try with treaty rights.

Lobbyists from the nuclear industry, the oil and gas industry, the mining industry and the pharmaceutical industry, for example, would however still have access to the ministers making these closed-door decisions.

The Coalition calls on all Parliamentarians to support amending Bill C-15, to delete the proposed modifications to the existing Red Tape Reduction Act, sections 203 to 209 of the Bill (Part 5, Division 5).

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Signed

Émilie Tremblay, President, Canadian Association of Nurses for the Environment (CANE-ACIE)

Dr. Samantha Green, President, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE-ACME)

Anaïs Bussi res McNicoll, Director Fundamental Freedoms Program, Canadian Civil Liberties Association

Theresa A. McClenaghan, Executive Director and Counsel, Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA)

Joy Kennedy, Co-convener, Canadian Interfaith Fast for the Climate

Betty Plewes, Coordinator, Climate Legacy

Dru Oja Jay Executive Director, Council of Canadians

Carole Holmes, Cochair, Grand(m)others Act to Save the Planet (GASP)

Keith Stewart, Senior Energy Strategist, Greenpeace Canada

Akaash Maharaj Director of Policy, Nature Canada

Atiya Jaffar, Country Manager, 350.org Canada

Alan Silverman, Tylenne Appel, Co-chairs, Seniors for Climate Action Now!

David Smith, Coordinating Committee, Seniors for Climate

Gretchen Fitzgerald, Executive director, Sierra Club Canada

Patrick DeRochie Senior Manager, Shift Action for Pension Wealth and Planet Health (a project of Makeway)

David Suzuki

Natalie Odd, Executive Director, Alberta Environmental Network

Gail Riddell, Co-Chair, Alliance 4 Democracy

Kim Benson, Cofounder, BCTF Divest

Jared Blustein Executive Director, Calgary Climate Hub

Sherry Olson, Director on the board, Climate Justice Saskatoon

Haley Pukanski, Organizer, Climate Justice Edmonton

Phillip Meintzer, co-founder and campaign organizer, Coalition for Responsible Energy

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Tristan Dell, Organizer, Edmonton Youth for Climate

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Lyn Adamson, Co-Chair, Ontario Climate Emergency

Rod Olstad, Facilitator, Pesticide Free Edmonton

Da Braum Barber, Chair, Southern Alberta Group for the Environment (SAGE)

Jef Keighley, Co-chair, Sunshine Coast Seniors for Climate

Kim Benson, Founder and lead teacher, Teachers for Future Turtle Island

Jenny Yeremiy, Host and Public Activist, The Gravity Well

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