

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I'm writing you today because something is seriously wrong here in Canada. One would expect that changes affecting the healthcare of Canadians would be scrutinized by the Standing Committee on Health, not the Standing Committee on Finance. Yet, for the second year in a row, we allowed the Standing Committee on Finance to make decisions that affect the health of Canadians. Something is fundamentally wrong here.

The recent legislative proposal and subsequent royal assent of Bill C-69, the Budget Implementation Act of 2024 No. 1, revealed a concerning trend where Health Canada is granted expansive regulatory powers, this time over both off-label drug use and natural health products. This approach poses serious threats to both the healthcare sector and the autonomy of patients. I am deeply troubled by these developments and urge a thorough review and reconsideration of where and how such critical healthcare decisions are being made.

Why should my doctor or natural health practitioner be restricted in their ability to recommend off-label uses of therapeutic products? I am a unique individual, and I may have unique healthcare needs not addressed by on-label uses. The implications of Bill C-69 restricting the practice of my medical doctor or natural health practitioners extend beyond healthcare to touch upon fundamental issues of personal freedom and choice in health management.

The mechanisms granted to enforce these changes—potentially imposing fines up to \$5 million per day and imprisonment—underscore the severity and punitive nature of the regulatory approach being adopted. Such measures could create an environment of fear and compliance that is in direct opposition to the spirit of innovation and patient-centred care that Canada's healthcare system is already struggling to uphold.

This approach not only risks compromising patient care by stifling medical innovation and limiting treatment options but also encroaches on the jurisdiction traditionally held by provinces over health, as delineated by The British North America Act of 1867. The centralization of such powers with the federal government, without sufficient checks and balances, could lead to significant legal challenges and exacerbate tensions between federal and provincial authorities over health governance.

Given these concerns, I urge you to consider the broader implications of Division 31 of Bill C-69 on our healthcare system and the rights of Canadians to make informed decisions about their health treatments alongside health professionals. It is imperative that such sweeping changes be subject to more rigorous scrutiny and debate, through the Standing Committee on Health rather than the Standing Committee on Finance, to ensure that any legislative changes serve the public interest without compromising patient safety or healthcare provider autonomy.

I kindly request your support in advocating for this issue within the parliamentary process, ensuring that the voices of healthcare professionals and patients alike are heard and considered. Your leadership in challenging the overreach proposed in Division 31 of Bill C-69 is crucial in safeguarding the foundational principles of our healthcare system.

I expect you to advocate for Division 31 of Bill C-39, the Budget Implementation Act of 2024 No. 1, to be repealed now that it has become law.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I look forward to your support and to a health policy environment that respects the needs and rights of all Canadians.

With utmost respect,

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Signed

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