

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

I am writing to express my deep concerns regarding the manner in which significant amendments to Canada's food and drug laws are being introduced through budget implementation bills, specifically referencing the recent introduction of Bill C-69, the Budget Implementation Act of 2024 No. 1. The procedural and substantive issues raised by the inclusion of such critical changes in a budget bill require urgent attention and action.

By embedding amendments to the Food and Drugs Act within budget bills, there is a concerning lack of scrutiny and public oversight. The 2023 Budget (Bill C-47) exemplified this issue, where significant regulatory changes, including the reclassification of natural health products and an alarming increase in potential fines, were enacted with minimal public awareness and debate. The public backlash and engagement on this issue since has been nothing short of remarkable.

Given the public's generally negative response to Bill C-47's effect on the regulation of natural health products, the continued practice of including non-budgetary regulatory changes in budget bills is even more concerning. This practice fundamentally undermines the democratic legislative process. Changes to food and drug law carry profound implications for public health and safety and, as such, merit careful consideration by the Standing Committee on Health, which is specifically equipped to handle the nuances and complexities of health legislation.

The implications of bypassing the specialized scrutiny that the Standing Committee on Health can offer are severe. It diminishes the quality of legislative oversight and potentially compromises the efficacy and safety of healthcare practices and products available to Canadians. Furthermore, it deprives healthcare professionals and the general public of the opportunity to participate in a meaningful review and discussion of proposals that directly impact their health and professional practices.

Considering these issues, I urge you to advocate for the following:

1. Discontinuation of the practice of embedding significant food and drug law amendments within budget bills, ensuring that such changes are introduced through stand-alone legislation.
2. The referral of all health-related legislative amendments to the Standing Committee on Health to ensure that they receive the necessary expert evaluation and public scrutiny.
3. Advocate for the repeal of Division 31 from Bill C-69, the Budget Implementation Act of 2024 No. 1, now that it has become law.

As my elected representative, your role in ensuring that legislative processes remain transparent, accountable, and inclusive is crucial. I expect that you will oppose the bypassing of crucial legislative review and support actions that maintain our legislative integrity and protect the health and safety of all Canadians.

Thank you for considering this critical issue. I look forward to your support and to seeing effective action taken in Parliament to address these concerns.

Sincere regards,

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Signed

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Dated