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February 17, 2018

The Right Hon. Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

The Catholic Women's League of Canada, representing more than 80,000 citizens across Canada, are writing to express concern about the attestation requirements on the 2018 Canada Summer Jobs Program. Members of the League are very concerned that a federal government would discriminate against its own citizens by forcing them to sign an attestation that compromises their belief system.

Canadian citizens, not just those with a particular set of religious values, are outraged that the federal government would take steps to force the people they represent to conform to the belief system of those in power in order to access services. The League implores you to understand that to ask someone to deny their faith or their beliefs in order to receive funding from the government is simply undemocratic, unconstitutional and unethical.

The federal government has the duty to protect and respect all of its citizens. It should not seek to silence those who would disagree or penalize them for their contrary viewpoints. Tolerance of and respect for all viewpoints, including the right to freedom of religion and freedom of conscience, were once hallmarks of Canadian society. Actions such as the attestation requirement make it increasingly difficult for all to live in peace in this country, and in fact, add to the polarization that is becoming more prevalent.

Members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada are anxious to know that the federal government values all citizens equally, regardless of conscience and religion; thought, belief, opinion and expression; peaceful assembly; and association. How does the federal government intend to address this discrimination?

Sincerely,

Margaret Ann Jacobs

Margaret Ann Jacobs
National President

KS/maj

Cc: The Hon. Patty Hajdu, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour

Betty Colaneri, National Chairperson of Community Life

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