

FIVE PRIORITIES FOR CANADA'S NEW PARLIAMENT

On January 23, voters elected one of the slimmest federal minority governments in our history. It could be argued, Canadians did not so much elect a government as an opposition. The Harper government has announced five priorities for the new Parliament, which opens next week. As non-partisan organizations, we join together today to speak about five priorities we believe enjoy widespread support among Canadians, and to call on both the government and opposition parties to set aside partisan differences and embrace these priorities in this session of Parliament. Together we call on all members of all parties to protect the Canada we know by embracing the following five priorities:

- Honour the child care agreement negotiated between the previous federal government and the provinces;
- Stop the drift towards private, for-profit health care in the provinces;
- Reject any effort to reopen debate on the issue of same-sex marriage;
- Strengthen the country's national public broadcaster, the CBC, through new, stable, arm's-length funding;
- Cease talks on deeper integration with the United States.

There are of course many other issues that set Canada apart as a progressive country, but we believe these five domestic priorities require the urgent action and support of all members of Parliament.

The Council of Canadians
Friends of Canadian Broadcasting
EGALE Canada
Coalition Solidarité Santé
Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada

March 30, 2006