

MUNASA's Statement on Bill 21

Recently, the Government of Québec has proposed a deeply troubling law under the guise of secularism that would prohibit certain Quebecers of faith from participating in public life and in the public sector. The academic community has long been a bastion of diversity and free thought. Pluralism enriches our communities and makes Québec a more prosperous and welcoming place to live. As the associations and labour unions representing the whole of the McGill Community, we stand together against this divisive law which attacks civil liberties.

AGSEM	MACES	MUNACA	SEU
AMURE	MAUT	MUNASA	SSMU
AMUSE	MCLIU	PGSS	

The **Executive Committee of the McGill University Non-Academic Staff Association (MUNASA)**, along with the Executive Committee of the McGill Association of University Teachers (MAUT), and the Labour Unions listed above believe that respect for diversity is essential to the healthy functioning of the McGill University community and Québec society as a whole.

We share the view, that the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms already ensures religious neutrality by protecting the dignity of our citizens and public employees and their fundamental right to religious expression. Bill 21 is designed to be punitive and discriminatory. This Bill prohibits deemed authority figures like teachers in the public sector, police officers, prison guards, prosecutors and judges from wearing religious symbols like the Muslim hijab, Jewish kippah or Sikh turban.

It serves merely to send a message that their personal religious beliefs are not wanted here in Québec and is nothing more than a dangerous assault on civil liberties.

Why does the government feel the need to adopt laws to marginalize certain religious Québecers – laws that disproportionately affect Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, and women? No one should live in fear or uncertainty about their job or place in Québec because they choose to practice their religion.

We call on the government of Québec to respect the Charter of Rights and Freedom. A free society cannot be called free when it, without reason, demands certain citizens to choose between their faith and participation in public life. This law has no place in a multicultural, secular, modern Québec and must be repealed.