

## The Facts:

- Anti-terrorism laws were passed in Canada for the first time in 2001 by the then-Liberal government. The controversial legislation included a sunset clause for particularly contentious measures.
- New security laws were passed at various times since then.
- The most recent law, the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2015 (commonly known as Bill C-51), was passed into law in June 2015.
- Dozens of experts and civil society representatives, including NCCM, appeared before parliamentary hearings to make recommendations about the bill. Almost none of the recommendations were accepted.
- The current government has specifically said it would accept information that could have been obtained through torture, and could share information with countries that torture.
- Very little funding has been made available towards grassroots, made-in-Canada, efforts to combat violent extremism, or to strengthen mental health, and social services targeting the vulnerable and marginalized.
- Veterans have complained about a lack of support by the Conservative government, with the cutting of staff, and closure of offices.



## The Issues:

The National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM), along with legal experts & human rights organizations, identified the following problems with Bill C-51:

- Lack of independent oversight in national security coupled with increased discretion and powers.
- Insufficient judicial review of no-fly lists, which are notoriously prone to error.
- No response to the recommendations of the Maher Arar Inquiry.
- Addition of unnecessarily broad and vague provisions relating to terrorism.
- Chill on free expression with criminalization of speech.
- Judicial sanctioning of **Charter** violations.
- Enhanced information sharing provisions which include accepting information which may have come from torture and sharing information with partners those who may use or subcontract torture.

## The Parties:

### Conservatives:

- Proposed and passed Bill C-51 as necessary to protect national security; have officially and consistently identified the threat as “jihadi terrorism”, terminology which Canadian security agencies say is problematic; have publicly drawn links between violent extremism and Canadian mosques.

### NDP:

- Voted against Bill C-51 and vow to repeal the entire law. They suggest focusing on putting resources into preventing violent radicalization.

### Liberals:

- Supported Bill C-51. However, the party says it will make amendments to strengthen oversight of security agencies, as well as remove measures which authorize violations of the Charter. They support information-sharing. They would include a sunset clause in the law.

### Green:

- Would repeal Bill C-51, called for building bridges and increasing funding for mental health, addiction counselling and outreach anti-radicalization programs.

## Where do Canadians Stand?

According to the most recent polling, a majority of Canadians oppose Bill C-51.

Bill C-51 was criticized by four former Prime Ministers, former Supreme Court Justices, Ministers of Justice, and former members of the Intelligence Review Committee.

### Questions to ask candidates:

- How do you think the government can help keep Canadians safe?
- Why do you think Bill C-51 is/isn't helpful?
- How much money would your government commit to supporting grassroots programs aimed at supporting marginalized youth?
- How important do you think it is to work with Canadian Muslim communities as partners?
- How would your government seek to build bridges with diverse communities, and challenge racism and xenophobia?
- How would you support Canada's troops when they return home?

