



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Kevin Waugh

Member of Parliament/Député
Saskatoon-Grasswood/Saskatoon Grasswood



PRESS RELEASE

C-210 PROCEEDING AT RECORD SPEED WITH LITTLE CONSULTATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OTTAWA - June 2, 2016 - Today, at the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, we witnessed a complete lack of democracy in our parliamentary process. On June 1st, The House voted on Bill C-210, MP Mauril Bélanger's private members bill, which seeks to make the national anthem gender-neutral by replacing the line, in the English version, "in all thy sons command" with "in all of us command."

The Bill passed and was swiftly moved to The Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage the following morning for study. Due to the lack of lead time, we were only able to have one witness attend committee who discussed the Anthem from an historical perspective. Dr. Chris Champion pointed out that the term "sons" in the context of the era in which the anthem was written did not only refer to males, but to all citizens and he cited other instances where this is the case. This is important historical context and after all, our National Anthem is a symbol of our history.

"We wanted to have more witnesses attend Committee and we had a number of people, including the author's grandson express an interest in discussing this change, however, there was not enough time to get them here," said MP Waugh. "Changing the lyrics of our National Anthem is not a decision to be taken lightly or without full debate and consultation. This government is proceeding at record speed with this Bill to the detriment of proper procedure and consultation. Let's hope the Senate can do a better job of consulting on this Bill."

We may all be singing a new National Anthem come July 1st.

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