



Abortion Rights
Coalition of Canada

Your Voice for Choice

Coalition pour le droit à
l'avortement au Canada

Canada's only national political pro-choice advocacy group

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National Abortion Rights Group Asks Williams Lake to Rescind Anti-Abortion Proclamation

WILLIAMS LAKE, BC – A national abortion rights group has sent a letter to the Mayor and Council of Williams Lake in BC, asking them to immediately rescind their “highly inappropriate” proclamation for a “Celebration of Life” week running from Sept 28 to Oct 5. The Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada says the local anti-abortion group behind the proclamation is using the City to advance a viewpoint that discriminates against women and would deny women their Charter rights.

“The website of the proclamation’s sponsoring group, Choice for Life Society of Williams Lake, is explicitly Christian and is almost entirely concerned with abortion. So in fact, the City-approved proclamation is only about ‘celebrating’ embryos and fetuses and nothing else,” said Joyce Arthur, Executive Director of the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada (ARCC).

“It’s very important for cities to evaluate the group behind a proclamation request before approving it,” said Arthur. “Although the title and wording of the Proclamation seem benign, that’s because groups with an unpopular agenda will often cloak their real views to appear more credible and gain support.” In this case, Arthur said that access to abortion is a legal service and a fundamental right for women, so the proclamation represents an attempt to obtain the City’s official support for an attack on women’s human rights and democratically-decided laws.

A local pro-choice activist in Williams Lake, Carrie Julius, has also written to the Mayor and Council to protest the City Council’s unanimous approval of the proclamation, which has apparently been approved for the past several years. “As a woman, mother, and citizen of Williams Lake, I object to this proclamation and am deeply offended,” said Julius. “Reproductive freedom and women’s right to choose is, in my opinion, not a matter for City Council members to challenge or disapprove of in any way.”

ARCC’s September 27 letter to the Mayor and Council of Williams Lake is posted here: <http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/action/williams-lake-arcc-letter.pdf>

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