

Canada Watch

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Supreme Court win: The EFC helps preserve prostitution laws

In a unanimous decision released in July, the Supreme Court upheld two sections of Canada's current prostitution laws, the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act* (PCEPA).

The case of *Kloubakov v. Canada* involved two men who worked for an escort agency in Alberta run by convicted traffickers. The duo worked as drivers but also collected money the women earned and transferred it to the agency owners. They were convicted of procuring women into prostitution and benefitting materially from the prostitution of others.

"This case illustrates really well how prostitution is a system of exploitation and how it's nearly impossible to prevent abuse and coercion within that

system," says Julia Beazley, director of public policy at the EFC.

At issue was whether these two provisions of PCEPA were constitutional. This is the first time the Supreme Court considered the current prostitution laws, enacted in 2014.

The EFC has long advocated that such laws are essential tools to stop exploitation. The overall objective is to reduce demand for prostitution, discourage and deter entry into it, and ultimately abolish it as much as possible. This protects individuals and communities from the range of harms associated with prostitution.

"The EFC has long argued prostitution is not merely a series of interactions between purchasers and purchased that exist independently of one another," says



Beazley. "Prostitution is part of a system of exploitation based on structural inequalities that preys on vulnerabilities."

The EFC co-intervened with the Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA) in support of the laws, arguing the system of prostitution is inherently exploitative and that our current prostitution laws protect human dignity.

The Court's decision is a significant finding in favour of the laws. It thoroughly analyzed and explained the objectives of the laws and how they are properly interpreted, affirming what the EFC has argued.

"Profiting from [the buying and selling] of another person's sexual activity inherently involves exploitation," says Lia Milousis, legal counsel for the EFC and

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What you can do

- Thank God for this court decision. Pray for His protection of Canadians vulnerable to sexual exploitation, for proper enforcement of good laws and for funding of support programs.
- Consider donating so we're ready for the next legal intervention at TheEFC.ca/Donate.
- Learn more at TheEFC.ca/Prostitution.



**Centre for Ministry Partnership
and Innovation**

Convening and collaborating to support
the evangelical church in Canada



**Centre for Research on
Church and Faith**

Connecting research with ministry



**Centre for Faith and
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Faithful witness through thoughtful,
constructive engagement in public life

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ARPA. Parliament clearly held that view when it passed these laws, and the Court decision noted that.

Milousis sees the influence of the EFC and ARPA submissions in the Court decision where it asserts that commodification (turning sex into something bought and sold) doesn't need to involve excessive profits to be considered exploitative. The Court accepted that "the system of prostitution is inherently exploitative, in every instance," she says.

This was the 33rd time the EFC has intervened at the Supreme Court. With your support, we were able to argue strongly in support of these laws which uphold human dignity and prevent exploitation. Thank you for making it possible.

This strong decision adds to other lower court findings in favour of the laws, including the 2022 Ontario Superior Court decision which found all the provisions of PCEPA to be constitutional. The EFC intervened in that case as well, which found that "violence is a feature, not a bug" of prostitution, and that there is "a clear link between sex work and human trafficking."

In the 2022 decision Justice Goldstein found Parliament's view of the sex trade is well grounded in evidence and concluded that, overall, he finds "Parliament's response to a pressing and substantial concern is a carefully crafted legislative scheme that prohibits the most exploitive aspects of the sex trade while immunizing sex workers from prosecution."

The Ontario lower court decision in favour of PCEPA is likely to be appealed by pro-prostitution groups. If it is, the EFC will once again seek to intervene.

Even as we welcome and celebrate this decision, please continue to pray with us for those who are vulnerable to exploitation in Canada and for good laws to be upheld.



By hosting
an EFC Sunday,
your church
will learn, connect
and engage.



The why and how of an EFC Sunday in your church

You're invited to participate this November in Together for Canada: An EFC Sunday for Prayer and Partnership in the Gospel.

We're creating this new annual event to celebrate and deepen our connection with you. When your congregation is an EFC affiliate, you have access to a host of resources to help your community members live out their faith effectively in Canadian society.

Participating in this event helps everyone in your community become aware of the partnership between your congregation and the EFC, and it invites them to use the wide range of EFC affiliate resources for personal study and Christian activism, small group discussion and a lot more.

You might decide to set aside five minutes in one of your worship services, or perhaps an adult Sunday school class or midweek small group. You might show the short video from our president that we've provided.

You could limit your participation to once during the month or take several weeks to work through different EFC resources, such as our Faith Matters video series.

It's even possible to participate by pointing your community to some of our materials through a congregational email newsletter or in a printed church bulletin.

Please sign up to get your resource pack at TheEFC.ca/TogetherForCanada. You'll be able to choose among prayer suggestions, slides you can project on a screen, short videos, a summary list of available EFC resources for congregants, and more.

Together
FOR CANADA

**An EFC Sunday
for Prayer and
Partnership in
the Gospel**

**JOIN EFC AFFILIATES ACROSS CANADA ON A NOVEMBER SUNDAY
OF YOUR CHOICE TO CELEBRATE OUR SHARED MISSION.**



A note from EFC President David Guretzki

I'd like to ask you to pray for the World Evangelical Alliance, which is holding its General Assembly in Seoul, South Korea Oct. 27–31. This gathering, which happens every six years, is a great boost to global unity, discernment and planning. You could pray for all involved, including my work representing Canada alongside many others and my work

as treasurer of the WEA International Council. Please be assured that I and the EFC staff continue to pray for you as well, and we welcome your prayer requests. You may also join us in the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church on Nov. 2 this year (free Canadian resources which the EFC contributed to are at IDOP.ca) and in Together for Canada, a new EFC annual November event (see facing page). Thank you for supporting the EFC in our role to build up God's Church.

Supporting a denominational review of mission

Jon Fuller, the EFC's resident missiologist, has been invited to help lead a mission-related consultation with the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada, an EFC affiliate denomination that includes about 100 churches, two Bible colleges, six camps and a global mission arm called EMCC World Partners.

EMCC leaders have acknowledged the "rapidly shifting landscape of global missions and the evolving role of Canadian churches and mission agencies in cross-cultural and international contexts." The consultation is a way of initiating an inclusive conversation on these issues.

Fuller and his team will participate in interviews with church and mission agency leaders from outside the EMCC and with selected stakeholders within the EMCC. An online survey is also allowing EMCC congregational leaders to share their reflections on mission sending practices and structures in their churches and across the denomination.

This consultation flows from a broader plan within EFC's Centre for Ministry Partnership and Innovation (TheEFC.ca/CMPI) to offer a variety of ministry consulting services to affiliates.



Uniting Evangelicals to bless Canada in the name of Jesus



Updating you on Canada's most immediate issues

■ **Pre-budget submissions:** What should be in the next federal budget? The EFC made the same six recommendations to both the House of Commons finance committee and to the Department of Finance: (1) maintain the advancement of religion as a charitable purpose; (2) avoid politicizing charitable status; (3) increase funding to protect places of worship; (4) establish a permanent national strategy to fight human trafficking; (5) support exit services for individuals in prostitution; and (6) work with the provinces and territories to improve access to palliative care with initiatives that recognize palliative care as distinct from practices such as MAiD that intentionally end the life of the patient.

TheEFC.ca/Government

■ **Harvest Ministries case:** The EFC is co-intervening in a court case on religious freedom to be heard in Quebec this fall. Harvest Ministries' rental agreement to hold a conference at a public venue was cancelled by a provincial cabinet minister who cited the group's pro-life beliefs as the reason for cancelling the contract. The EFC is intervening with the Canadian

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Centre for Christian Charities and a Quebec evangelical association.

TheEFC.ca/Courts

■ **St. Paul's Hospital case:** The ability of faith-based institutions to offer care that is consistent with their religious beliefs will be at issue in a B.C. case to be heard early in 2026. The EFC has been granted intervener status in the St. Paul's Hospital case and will focus on the ability of Christian institutions to provide services without being compelled to compromise their beliefs. This case will determine whether faith-based facilities are able to be MAiD-free spaces.

TheEFC.ca/Courts

■ **MAiD for mental illness:** If nothing changes, Canada's law will allow eligibility for euthanasia on the basis of mental illness alone as of March 17, 2027. This expansion was part of legislation passed in 2021, but that part of the law had a delay built-in before it would take effect. BC MP Tamara Jansen has introduced a bill that would stop this expansion. Bill C-218 is expected to be debated this fall, with a vote on whether it should proceed to be studied in committee. This bill will need widespread support to pass. Find simple steps to support the bill at **TheEFC.ca/C-218**.

Francophone representation in EFC research

The EFC's ministry research arm, known as the EFC Centre for Research on Church and Faith, works hard to fairly represent the diversity of the Canadian evangelical community, including francophones in Quebec and elsewhere.

About 22% of Canadians have French as their first official language, with some French settlements dating back to the early 1600s. Our country has been officially bilingual since 1969, when English and French were named official languages of all federal institutions. Good research needs to transcend these language differences – and to consider cultural barriers too.

EFC staff met Marie-Josée Fortin at a research consultation and were impressed by her passionate advocacy for French representation in ministry research. The evangelical movement is considered quite young in French Canada and is therefore in need of robust data and careful analysis.

Fortin understands the church, not only as a PhD student in theology, but also a church member for many decades in Quebec. She finds the work of the EFC compelling, she says, "because the researchers are trying to fill that void, the gap between those who are in leadership, and the ones who sit to listen."

She's now contracted to serve as a French language transcriptionist and interviewer for current research projects. While the EFC also employs a Quebec ambassador and has a range of other Quebec connections, the current research with women in particular needed a francophone female correspondent (TheEFC.ca/Women-in-Church).

"Getting to know people outside of my own province has helped me see how different we are, and yet so similar," she says. EFC research is stronger because of the nuance she brings to our research analysis.



Marie-Josée Fortin

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The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (*Alliance évangélique du Canada*) is the national association "uniting Evangelicals to bless Canada in the name of Jesus." Since 1964 the EFC has provided a national forum for Evangelicals, fostered ministry partnerships, conducted research on religious and social trends and provided a constructive voice for biblical principles in life and society.



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM



SANCTITY OF LIFE



CHURCH & MISSION



FAMILY & COMMUNITY



CARE FOR THE VULNERABLE