

February 20, 2022

Dear Senator,

I am writing this letter to implore you to vote against the confirmation of the Emergencies Act that was declared by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government on February 14, 2022.

Section 3 of the Emergencies Act clearly defines a "national emergency" as a situation that (a) "seriously endangers the lives, health or safety of Canadians and is of such proportions or nature as to exceed the capacity or authority of a province to deal with it," or (b) "seriously threatens the ability of the Government of Canada to preserve the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of Canada" and "that cannot be effectively dealt with under any other law of Canada."

The Freedom Convoy and related protests that have taken place across our nation in the last several weeks **unequivocally do not meet these criteria**. Arguably the most disruptive component of these protests, the blockade at the Ambassador Bridge in Windsor, Ontario, was broken up without incident by law enforcement, resulting in traffic resuming on Sunday, February 13, *before* the invocation of the Act on February 14.¹ This clearly demonstrates that existing legislation and law enforcement resources were indeed sufficient to resolve the disruption; the extraordinary powers granted by the Emergencies Act were not necessary then, and they are not necessary now.

I am not the only Canadian who is profoundly concerned by the invocation of this Act, unprecedented in our nation's history. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association has filed an application for judicial review in federal court that requests an order quashing the Emergency Proclamation.² The premiers of Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan,³ Quebec,⁴ New Brunswick,

¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/windsor-ambassador-bridge-police-protest-1.6350120>

² <https://ccla.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Emergencies-Act-NOA.pdf>

³ <https://nationalpost.com/pmnl/health-pmnl/premiers-of-three-canadian-provinces-oppose-pm-trudeau-invoking-emergency-measures>

⁴ <https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/quebec-s-national-assembly-officially-rejects-use-of-emergencies-act-1.5782605>

and Nova Scotia⁵ have all publicly denounced this use of the Emergencies Act. Even Paul Champ, a lawyer representing the residents in Ottawa in a class-action lawsuit against the Freedom Convoy, wrote “although I am acutely aware of the trauma experienced by Ottawa residents, I fully agree that the Emergencies Act is a dangerous tool that was not required.”⁶

What concerns me most are the abilities the government has granted itself to freeze personal bank accounts “of anyone linked with the protests without any need for a court order.”⁷ My concern deepened on Saturday, February 19, when Steve Bell, interim police chief of Ottawa, said, “If you are involved in this protest, we will actively look to identify you and follow up with financial sanctions and criminal charges,” saying that “this investigation will go on for months to come.”⁸

Senator, behaviour such as this is characteristic of undemocratic, illiberal nations from which many immigrants to Canada have fled. I myself immigrated to Canada only recently, in 2018, partly because of the opportunities provided to me by this great nation and partly because I *never* would have imagined that my livelihood might be seriously threatened by a government grasping unjustifiably and unprecedentedly at totalitarian power to be used against law-abiding citizens.

Senator, I plead with you from the bottom of my heart to vote against the confirmation of the Emergencies Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joshua Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joshua Brian Anderson
Ontario resident and Canadian citizen

⁵ <https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/politicians-in-the-maritimes-do-not-believe-the-emergencies-act-is-needed-in-the-region-1.5782820>

⁶ <https://twitter.com/paulchamplaw/status/1494477818184536068>

⁷ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-60383385>

⁸ <https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/ottawa-s-police-chief-says-criminal-investigations-into-freedom-convoy-will-continue-for-months-1.5788567>