

October 10, 2014

Hon. Chris Alexander, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 1L1

Dear Minister Alexander,

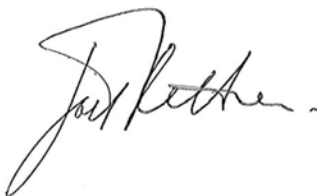
On behalf of The Public Health Physicians of Canada, I would like to add our voice to the concerns put forth by the Canadian Medical Association letter dated October 2, 2014 as well as many other letters from Canadian health providers' organizations, and urge you to withdraw the Federal Government's appeal of the ruling of the Federal Court released on July 4, 2014 (*Canadian Doctors for Refugee Care v AG Canada*; 2014 FC 651).

As specialists in preventive medicine, we are concerned that the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of our public health and health care programs will be adversely affected by the changes to the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) that have limited the access to health programs and services for refugees.

Adding barriers to prevention and early primary care for this already disadvantaged group can only result in higher use of acute health care services and worse outcomes, resulting in negative impacts for refugees and all Canadians, including the increased risk of communicable disease transmission and spread.

We, therefore, urge you, in the interest of the health of all Canadians, to withdraw the appeal and to reverse the changes to the IFHP of Bill C-31.

Yours sincerely,



Joel Kettner MD MSc FRCSC FRCPC
President, Public Health Physicians of Canada