



 MomsStopTheHarm
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Prime Minister Justin Trudeau
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

February 14, 2022

Re: Bill C-216, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to enact the Expungement of Certain Drug-related Convictions Act and the National Strategy on Substance Use Act.

Dear Prime Minister:

We are writing on behalf of Moms Stop The Harm (MSTH) to request that you support Bill C-216, *An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to enact the Expungement of Certain Drug-related Convictions Act and the National Strategy on Substance Use Act*.

As MP Gord Johns indicated during first reading of his private Member's bill on December 15, 2021, C-216 is designed to treat substance use and addiction as health issues by taking various measures, including decriminalizing personal drug possession, providing for record expungement, ensuring low-barrier access to safe supply, and expanding access to harm reduction, treatment and recovery services. We know that we need to support people who use substances, rather than locking them up.

MSTH wholeheartedly endorses this proposed legislation and was encouraged during the recent take-note debate on the overdose crisis in the House to see that some Liberal MPs see this bill, or at least tenets of this bill, as a way forward.

Our organization firmly believes we need a bill like C-216 if we are ever going to adequately address the overdose and drug poisoning crisis. Because of the stigma related to the ongoing criminalization of substance use, people use and die alone, as many of our loved ones have. We understand that decriminalization needs to be combined with other measures to have the desired outcomes in saving lives, but this key legislative proposal would, if implemented, allow the country to shift needed resources from the justice system to health and social services.



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Measures taken to date have failed. The results of this failure are heartbreaking in the extreme. About 25,000 Canadians have died since 2016, according to official figures that are at least seven months out of date. And as Gord Johns recently noted, “20 people are going to die today, and more tomorrow. Every day that we wait on implementing these common-sense reforms, people will die.”

MSTH is calling for bold action, as the Health Canada expert task force has also urged, so that thousands of our children and other loved ones do not continue to die from preventable deaths. We believe that C-216 amounts to bold action and we would once again urge you to support this important piece of legislation. It will save lives. And it will be remembered for decades to come as an extraordinary example of parties working together to do the right thing.

We look forward to your response to our request for support. Please send any reply to info@momsstoptheharm.com. Thank you!

Your truly,

Leslie McBain
Co-founder and Chair
Board of Directors
Moms Stop The Harm

Petra Schultz
Co-founder and Vice-Chair
Board of Directors
Moms Stop The Harm

C.c. Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
Brendan Hanley, MP for Yukon
Gord Johns, MP for Courtenay-Alberni
Jagmeet Singh, Leader, New Democratic Party
Amita Kuttner, Interim Leader, Green Party
Yves-François Blanchet, Leader, Bloc Québécois