

News Release

Russ Hiebert
Member of Parliament



Media Advisory



Hiebert Promotes C-377 Transparency Bill in Senate

(Ottawa) - MP Russ Hiebert appeared before the Senate Banking Committee today to testify about the importance of passing his Bill C-377 which will require public financial disclosure by labour organizations.

"My bill follows in the tradition of other transparency legislation the Senate has passed recently, including the Accountability Act, and also C-27 which requires financial transparency for native reserves," said Mr. Hiebert. "C-377 will help Canada catch up to the US, the UK, France, Germany and Australia in having public financial disclosure of labour organization finances."

"The fundamental premise behind C-377 is that the public is providing a substantial benefit, and they should know how that benefit is being used," Mr. Hiebert explained to Senators. "After all, charities, which also receive substantial benefits from the public, have been publicly reporting on their finances for the past 36 years, now."

Mr. Hiebert indicated that C-377 is both constitutional and will not violate individual privacy. "C-377 does not attempt to regulate labour organizations in any way, compel them to spend money, or dictate how they may spend their money," said Mr. Hiebert. "And, amendments I made to C-377 when it was in the House of

Commons eliminated any uncertainty about the fact that pension plans, health benefit plans and other regulated plans will not be required to report under C-377 and that benefit payments to individuals from such registered plans will not be reportable."

Emphasizing the level of public support for labour organization transparency, Mr. Hiebert referenced a national poll. "The Nanos Labour Day Survey found 83% of the general population and fully 86% of unionized Canadians support public financial disclosure for labour organizations. It is possible those numbers have increased given the current public focus on issues of transparency and accountability," said Mr. Hiebert.

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