

A Win for Canada's Public Servant Whistleblowers

-History was made recently when the peoples representatives in the House of Commons voted unanimously to improve the whistleblower protection law.

OTTAWA, ON, CANADA, February 8, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ --

Whistleblowing Canada is celebrating and with good reason. On January 31st, 2024, Canada's Members of Parliament unanimously passed Private Members Bill C290, an Act to amend the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act (PSDPA) sponsored by MP Jean-Denis Garon – Mirabel, Quebec. This Federal law, the PSDPA, on which the provinces have modelled their laws, is notorious world-wide for its ineffectiveness. A [recent study](#) identified it as one of the worst in the world as it, in effect, had no best practices out of 20 recognized internationally for such legislation. Now, thanks to MP Garon, it has 8 out of 20, a definite step in the right direction.



President

According to Mr. Garon, "There is nothing more important for a government than an ethical, competent and responsible public service, and we must value the work of our public servants. Public servants are in the best position to note irregularities in government, in its management of public monies and use of Crown assets. Sometimes, out of a sense of responsibility, these officials become whistle-blowers by disclosing wrongdoing. It is an extremely important role. For that reason, we must protect them".

Mr. Garon thanked members of Whistleblowing Canada's Board and Advisory Board at a Jan. 31st Press conference for sharing their expertise during the legislative process. This included internationally recognized expert Tom Devine, from the Government Accountability Project, Joanna Gualtieri, lawyer, who did the first analysis of the flawed Bill in 2004, and Pamela Forward, whose [2017 study](#) identified that attention to culture concurrently is the over-riding

factor for success in implementing whistleblower protection laws. Each has worked in the field of whistleblowing for decades – Devine since 1978, and Gualtieri and Forward since the mid-1990's.

Whistleblowing Canada President Forward said “We salute MP Garon who immediately saw the urgent need to act when, shortly after his election, he began receiving many phone calls from whistleblowers with disturbing stories of retaliation for doing their jobs and disclosing wrongdoing”.

Whistleblowing Canada looks forward to working with MP Garon and other MP's and Senators as Bill C290 begins the next step in the legislative process and is introduced in the Senate for approval.

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