

Media Contact:
The Canadian Coalition for Genetic Fairness
Bev Heim-Myers, Chair 519-749-7063
info@ccgf-cccg.ca



The Canadian Coalition for Genetic Fairness applauds new Private Members Bill to stop Genetic Discrimination

(KITCHENER) October 1, 2012 – The Coalition for Genetic Fairness/La Coalition canadienne pour l'équité génétique (CCGF/CCEG) came out in support of a Private Members Bill put forth in Ottawa today by NDP MP Libby Davies (Vancouver East). Bill C-445, An Act to Amend the Canadian Human Rights Act (Genetic Characteristics), if moved forward, would add genetic characteristics to the Human Rights Act and help end genetic discrimination in Canada. Genetic discrimination occurs when people are treated unfairly because of differences within their genetic make-up (DNA) based on a perceived future disability– discrimination can include the denial of insurance coverage, or job opportunities.

Canada is currently the only G8 country that does not have laws in place to protect the use of its citizens' DNA. The United States and the countries of the European Union have all moved to stop this practice.

"This is a welcome step forward to ending the quiet practice of genetic discrimination in Canada. Discrimination based on gender, race, religion or culture is not acceptable. The same should be true for discrimination based on the genes we are born with. Citizens should not have to fear job lose or being denied insurance coverage because of their genetic makeup," said Bev Heim-Myers Chair, Canadian Coalition for Genetic Fairness and CEO of the Huntington Society of Canada.

The Canadian Coalition for Genetic Fairness applauds Ms. Davies efforts as concern remains as to how the protection of an individual's genetic information will be achieved.

For Canadians to fully benefit from advancements such as 'personalized medicine' (targeted treatment strategies based on genetic test results) the Federal government must first implement new laws to protect the use of genetic information by adding genetic characteristics to our Human Rights Act or another vehicle to enable this protection.

Genetic discrimination affects all Canadians. Know your rights, talk to your local Member of Parliament! To learn more visit Canadian Coalition for Genetic Fairness's www.ccgf-cccg.ca

-30-

The Canadian Coalition for Genetic Fairness/La Coalition canadienne pour l'équité génétique (CCGF/CCEG) is a coalition of organizations dedicated to preventing genetic discrimination for all Canadians. The Coalition is deeply concerned about discrimination against individuals based on their genetic make-up. We are united to educate Canadians about genetic discrimination and to influence governments, both federal and provincial, and other relevant organizations to create change. CCGF/CCEG currently represents 18 hereditary genetic diseases in Canada.

For more information, please contact:

The Canadian Coalition for Genetic Fairness

Bev Heim-Myers, Chair CCGF and CEO and Executive Director of the Huntington Society of Canada
519-749-7063
info@ccgf-cccg.ca