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The National Advocacy Committee
Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign
Comité d'action national
Campagne de grands-mères à grands-mères



Statement Énoncé

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A VICTORY FOR DEMOCRACY: BILL C-393 WILL PROCEED TO A VOTE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Bill C-393 — life-saving legislation to reform Canada's broken Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR) — has today overcome a procedural hurdle and will move on to a final vote in the House of Commons. The bill received the unanimous consent of the House required to transfer its sponsorship to a sitting MP, thereby enabling it to continue through the democratic process in Parliament.

We thank the New Democratic Party, the Liberal Party, and the Bloc Québécois for following through on their previously stated commitment to consent to transferring sponsorship of Bill C-393. We would also like to thank the members of these parties who rose to speak in support of Bill C-393 this past Monday, January 31, during the bill's first hour of debate. Thank you for recognizing the rare opportunity before you to make meaningful change and to save lives now.

We commend Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the Conservative Party for agreeing to the request for a new sponsor and allowing Bill C-393 to proceed to a final vote in the House of Commons, in keeping with the strong spirit of Canadian democracy.

Bill C-393 has the power and potential to save lives in the developing world — and would most definitely contribute to the government's stated goal of reducing maternal and child mortality.

Bill C-393 also enjoys widespread public support, as demonstrated repeatedly to Parliamentarians. A national poll found that more than 80% of Canadians support reforming CAMR to make it workable and to ensure that generic drugs can quickly and affordably be sent to those most in need. Canadians also support our democratic process, as evidenced by the outpouring of support for the swift transfer of sponsorship of Bill C-393. Indeed, more than 3000 Canadians sent letters to this effect (www.letparliamentvote.ca), and some 25,000+ signed onto a similar petition in just hours (http://www.avaaz.org/en/let_parliament_vote/?v).

It is now our hope — a hope shared by many other civil society actors and concerned Canadians — that we can turn our attention to the critical substance of Bill C-393. Passing Bill C-393, with its “one-licence solution” restored and without a proposed amendment for a prohibitively short “sunset clause”, will streamline and strengthen CAMR and end needless suffering and death.

Today, we thank Members of Parliament from all sides of the House for doing the right thing on behalf of Canadians and allowing Bill C-393 to proceed to a final vote. We now look to them for the political leadership to pass a robust Bill C-393 and keep Parliament’s pledge to the developing world, when it first created Canada’s Access to Medicines Regime almost seven years ago.

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