

For Immediate Release
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Conservatives move to quadruple pardon fees

The John Howard Society of Manitoba is calling on the Federal Conservative Government to head the advice of its own officials and not quadruple the fee for getting a pardon.

“Last week the government introduced a bill that could prevent hundreds of thousands of Canadians from ever getting a pardon, this week they say they will quadruple the application fee for a pardon. Why does the government continue to put obstacles in the way of people who are trying to get a fresh start and live crime free lives from now on? What possible benefit is there in doing this” asked John Hutton, Executive Director of the John Howard Society of Manitoba.

By moving ahead with the fee increase, the government is ignoring the voice of the public and the advice of top officials within its own departments. “A public consultation process held last spring overwhelming rejected the fee increase. As well, 14 government bodies including the RCMP, the Canadian Border Services Agency, and the Justice Department were also consulted and came to the same conclusion; quadrupling the fee to \$600 would serve as a barrier to those trying to re-integrate back into society and would be particularly unfair to women and Aboriginal people,” Hutton noted.

Those consulted also felt that by going ahead, the government could be opening itself up to a Charter Challenge.

“The government has nothing to lose on this issue by following the advice its being given and to leave the fee at \$150”, Hutton noted. “After all, not listening to others is often a reason a person later needs a pardon”.

For more information contact

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