

March 18, 2022

HOUSE RESOLUTION 194

PERSONAL STATEMENT - RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, CANADA

I am a soon to be terminated pilot for Air Canada, having flown with our nation's flagship carrier for 15 years. Before this, I was a decorated military aviator, serving in the Royal Canadian Air Force for a combined 32 years of regular and reserve service, retiring as a Major. This included 3 tours in Afghanistan, two as a C130 aircraft captain and one as the Tactical Airlift Commander for Southwest Asia.

I was a Captain on Air Canada's Airbus A220 when I was put on unpaid leave after my vaccination religious exemption request was denied, October 30, 2022 by the perennially faceless and nameless 'Workplace Accommodation Office'. The company subsequently sent termination letters to all unvaccinated employees on March 7, 2022, with an effective date of May 1, 2022.

I also founded and co-direct Free to Fly Canada, a group advocating for Canadian freedoms and mobility rights. Our membership of 42,000 is made up of 3000 aviation professionals and 39000 passengers. In this capacity I am inundated with messages attesting that most religious exemption requests were denied. There was often no explanation provided and refusal of any right to appeal.

Air Canada has gone so far as to advise passengers they do not foresee *any* scenario where they would approve a religious exemption for travel, positioning themselves as both God and judge, one surpassing precedent rulings clearly supporting religious exemptions by the Supreme Court of Canada. We are witnessing complete disregard within our political and corporate worlds for the historically rich and legally solid grounds for religious freedom.

I attach a recent email sent to a passenger denied his religious accommodation to travel.

Anyone unvaccinated in Canada is unable to travel within or leave the country by air. By virtue of US vaccination requirements for entry, this same segregated minority are also unable to leave by land. This makes thousands within faith-based communities prisoners of a nation currently crushing religious freedom.

Frequent government mandates shuttering churches, the imprisonment of pastors who continue to shepherd their communities and the silencing freedom of religious expression have our family driving hours to attend what amount to underground churches. While we count it a blessing to do so, it is highly uncertain how much longer we will be able to manage this without further restrictions or punishment for our convictions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Greg Hill
Captain, Air Canada
Major (retired), Royal Canadian Air Force

Attachments:

1. Religious Exemption Request
2. Workplace Accommodation Office Denial
3. Air Canada Passenger Letter