



## RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

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PETITION No.: **421-01512**

BY: **MR. BOUDRIAS (TERREBONNE)**

DATE: **JUNE 13, 2017**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **PETER SCHIEFKE**

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Response by the Prime Minister

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

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SUBJECT

**Holding of referendums**

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**TRANSLATION**

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**REPLY**

The Government of Canada did not initiate the challenge to Bill 99, enacted in 2000 by the Government of Quebec. However, the Government of Canada was named as a respondent in this case and is merely reaffirming its longstanding position, which is consistent with the opinion of the Supreme Court of Canada.

In 1998, in the Quebec Secession Reference, the Supreme Court established that no province can, under domestic or international law, secede unilaterally. The Court ruled that, following a clear expression from Quebec's population in response to a clear question, the secession of a province of Canada, to be lawful, would require a constitutional amendment.

The Government of Canada's position in the Henderson case is that Quebec's Bill 99 should be read by the Court in a manner consistent with the Constitution and the definitive interpretation of the Supreme Court. Canada maintains that the Court must strike down Bill 99 only if the Court concludes that it is inconsistent with the Constitution. The Superior Court of Québec heard the Henderson case in March 2017. The Court has yet to make a decision and release its ruling.

The Government of Canada continues to focus on the priorities of Quebecers, namely, growing the middle class, encouraging clean growth, fighting climate change and renewing our relationship with Indigenous peoples.