

Program provides justice for all

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Re: Kill The Court Challenges Program, Lorne Gunter, Sept. 8.

Lorne Gunter's attack on the Court Challenges Program ignores the fundamental truth about the program: It makes access to justice a reality for the marginalized in our society. These people are too vulnerable and politically disenfranchised to obtain fair treatment from the system.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is intended to provide balance to ensure that the rights of these groups are recognized. But what is the point of having rights if you can't exercise them? Without the program's commitment to access to justice, these groups have no way to exercise their language and equality rights under the Charter.

It is an impoverished view of democracy that thinks only a privileged few voices should be part of the debate. Opponents of the Court Challenges Program may hold that view, but the Canadian Bar Association does not. We believe every Canadian has a right to access our legal system, and this program helps protect that right.

J. Parker MacCarthy,

President,

Canadian Bar Association, Ottawa