

February 4, 2002

The Honourable Denis Coderre, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration  
House of Commons  
Parliament Buildings  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Canadian Bar Association (CBA) National Citizenship and Immigration Law Section (the Section), to congratulate you on your appointment as Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

The CBA has a long history of activity on immigration issues. Our members bring a unique perspective to the development of immigration law and policy. Firstly, we put a legal context to the issues. Secondly, we are well placed to assess proposed policy changes against operational realities. The Section has been led by some of the most senior immigration lawyers in Canada, experts in all aspects of citizenship and immigration law. The CBA has a mandate to work to improve the law and the administration of justice, and we offer our assistance in the optic of public interest.

We wish to highlight two issues that you will face early in your term, namely the use of retroactivity to control the volume of applications, and the new selection criteria. In fairness to applicants in the queue, the Section opposes retroactive application of the law. We also believe that the proposed selection criteria for skilled workers contain fundamental flaws that will render the new system unable to produce the best and brightest immigrants that the government seeks to attract to Canada. We appeared before the Parliamentary Committee to discuss the proposed regulations on January 31, and will provide a more detailed analysis to you and your officials. Section Vice Chair Jean-François Harvey and I would welcome an opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience, to discuss these and other issues.

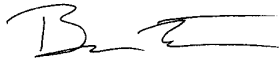
The Section will present its annual national continuing legal education program in Vancouver on April 12 and 13, 2002. The program will be, I believe, the most thorough program on the new immigration law and regulations, and will attract immigration practitioners from across the country. We would be honoured for you to deliver the opening address on April 12, or a

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luncheon address on either day. In addition, this will be the inaugural year for a new feature of the program, a reception to honour three "Immigrants of the Year". We would also be pleased for you to speak at the reception and perhaps present the winners with their awards. We will contact your office in the near future, to explore your participation in the program.

We look forward to working with you in the coming years.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Trister". The signature is stylized with a large initial "B" and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Benjamin J. Trister

Chair  
National Citizenship & Immigration Law Section