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January 20, 2017

Via email: Minister@cic.gc.ca

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, P.C. M.P.
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
365 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1A 1L1

Dear Minister:

On behalf of the Immigration Law Section of the Canadian Bar Association (CBA Section), I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. We are excited to work with you and to continue the constructive dialogue we have had with your department for many years.

The CBA is a national association representing over 36,000 jurists, including lawyers, notaries, law teachers and students across Canada. Our primary objectives include improvements in the law and the administration of justice. The CBA Section has approximately 1,000 members across Canada practising in all areas of immigration and refugee law.

Canada's immigration system is vital to our nation's success. It should be fair and efficient, and built on the principles of natural justice as well as Canadian policy interests, and the important objectives outlined in the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*. As you begin your mandate, we can offer you the unique perspective of a network of lawyers with expertise on how immigration law and policy touches the lives of Canadians every day.

Recent years have brought far-reaching changes to this system, many of which raised serious concerns for our members and the people we represent. These include client service shortfalls, challenges in balancing the interests of Canadians and Canadian businesses under the temporary foreign worker program, and fairness in refugee determination. They also include obstacles to family reunification and to economic immigration by those who would make valuable contributions to our economy and society.

We are pleased that your government has committed to addressing many of these issues, and applaud improvements made over the past year. In that light, we wish to bring to your attention some the CBA Section's priority issues:

1. Respecting the rule of law and principles of natural justice, particularly in the determination and cessation of refugee status, revocation of Canadian citizenship and granting conditional permanent residence;
2. Continuing to return to a structured, principled and transparent approach to determining the policy priorities for Canada's immigration system, including family reunification and global competitiveness;
3. Balancing changes in legislation and process with available resources to ensure public access and due process for applications, reducing both the need for litigation and damage to Canada's international reputation;
4. Creating opportunities for those economic immigrants inappropriately disadvantaged by current programs, including international students, academics, artists and key business people;
5. Balancing program integrity with desired outcomes and establishing reasonable and proportionate compliance mechanisms; and
6. Defining the appropriate role for Canada Border Services Agency with respect to processing immigration applications and enforcing outcomes, and providing oversight of its role.

The CBA Section submissions are available on our [website](http://www.cba.org/Sections/Immigration-Law/Submissions-and-Legislative-Updates): (<http://www.cba.org/Sections/Immigration-Law/Submissions-and-Legislative-Updates>). We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss these important issues.

In addition, we would like to invite you to be a keynote speaker at our Immigration Law Conference in Toronto on Friday, June 9, 2017 during our 1:00 pm EST luncheon as we celebrate Canada@150: The Immigration Experience. Our annual conference is the preeminent Canadian immigration law event, offering you an unparalleled opportunity to engage with the largest gathering of immigration lawyers and key stakeholders from across the country. Our attendees would be very interested in your own experience as an immigrant to Canada and your perspectives on Canada's priorities for immigration law and policy. We would request that your office respond by February 15, 2017 to confirm your availability to speak at the conference. There is some flexibility in the timing.

We look forward to offering you our expertise and assistance as you strive to improve the lives of Canadians.

Yours truly,

(original letter signed by Kate Terroux for Vance P.E. Langford)

Vance P.E. Langford
Chair, CBA Immigration Law Section