



## MOTION REGARDING SSMU OPPOSITION TO QUEBEC BILL N°62

**Whereas**, the SSMU is an organization that is committed to leadership in matters of human rights and strives to oppose discrimination in all its endeavors. As stated in the Leadership pillar in the preamble of the Constitution<sup>1</sup>:

All of the Society's endeavors shall be undertaken with full respect for human dignity and bodily sovereignty and without discrimination on the basis of irrelevant personal characteristics that include but are not limited to race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, sex, gender identification, age, mental or physical disability, language, sexual orientation or social class. The Society commits to demonstrating leadership in matters of human rights, social justice and environmental protection.

**Whereas**, Bill 62, which has completed the "passage in principle" (first reading) stage on November 15, 2016, requires that personnel of public bodies exercise their functions with "face uncovered" and imposes restrictions on religious accommodations for such personnel<sup>2</sup>;

**Whereas**, like the Parti Québécois' Charter of Quebec Values proposed in 2013, this Bill implicitly positions non-Christian individual religious practices as unambiguously opposed to common Quebec values, to gender equality, and to the secular character of the state;

**Whereas**, in response to this Bill, the Parti Québécois and the Coalition Avenir Québec are calling for more drastic measures to be taken by the government, including outlawing the wearing of any religious symbols by judges, prison guards, or police officers, and a province-wide ban of the niqab;

**Whereas**, the Bill's sponsor, Justice Minister Stéphanie Vallée, has admitted that there are currently "zero civil servants in Quebec who cover their faces, either with a niqab or burka"<sup>1</sup>, and the Quebec English School Boards Association has criticized the Bill as "unnecessary"<sup>1</sup>;

**Be it resolved**, that the SSMU publicly denounce the introduction and the passage in principle of Bill 62 for the reasons outlined above and condemn efforts to expand the scope of the Bill;

**Be it further resolved**, that the SSMU be mandated, through the Office of the Vice-President (External), to advocate against any further movement toward the adoption of the Bill as it stands.

### Moved by:

David Aird, Vice-President (External)

Ben Ger, President



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*Located on unceded, Kanien'kehá:ka traditional territory*

Submitted for January 12, 2017

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FOR APPROVAL



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<sup>1</sup> <http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SSMU-Constitution-2016-04-28.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.assnat.qc.ca/en/travaux-parlementaires/projets-loi/projet-loi-62-41-1.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://montrealgazette.com/news/quebec/religious-accommodations-debate-roars-back-to-life-as-bill-62-public-hearings-begin>

<sup>3</sup> [http://qesba.qc.ca/images/Bill\\_62\\_-\\_Brief\\_-\\_Eng.pdf](http://qesba.qc.ca/images/Bill_62_-_Brief_-_Eng.pdf)