Senators:

Odds are I'm the only person submitting testimony who was actually stripped of their Canadian citizenship. It happened when I was six, and it took 47 years for me to get it back.

Years ago Conservative MP Diane Ablonczy, while she was the Party's Citizenship Critic, said that the taking of citizenship by the government was tantamount to "capital punishment." Strong words, and accurate.

Let me start by saying there are times when revoking someone's citizenship is appropriate, like when a person lies or commits fraud to gain their Canadian status. Hopefully during the immigration process a person doing this would be vetted out, but in those few situations where they're discovered only after they become citizens, the process of revocation must be conducted through the judicial process. As it stands, a politician decides. Doing it this way, of allowing one's identity to be granted or taken away by a politician, has proven historically egregious the world over. Even Canada has quite an abysmal history, not just against individuals, but also targeted were entire groups based on a myriad of reasons, like race or gender.

For argument sake, let's agree that the last few successive governments, including the current one, would never strip citizenship from Canadians indiscriminately. Question: What will stop a future government from doing so?

Donald Trump said that he'll cancel citizenship to any American who burns the U.S. flag. Taking it further, what if he decides the only way to remain in power four years from now is to cancel any challenger's citizenship? Would he cancel Obama's or Hillary's? What stops him is the U.S. Constitution, because citizenship is a right in the States- not a privilege. Not so in Canada. In a recent judicial review I worked on, we argued that a war-bride child brought to Canada just after WWII was Canadian. The government said no, she wasn't. What made the case remarkable, was the government's statement that "the concept of Canadian citizenship and the status of 'Canadian citizen' are creatures of statute and they have no meaning apart from statute."

That means citizenship in Canada is whatever any current or future majority government says it is. Scary stuff, because no country is immune from fringe politicians. The world's always had its fair share of power-hungry wack-jobs. Did you know that one of the first things Hitler did was to cancel citizenship against all Jewish-Germans? Modern history is ripe with this sort of abuse.

As an airline pilot, my job is to look ahead and plan for every conceivable contingency. The same should be true with with Parliamentarians and citizenship. If a fringe-politician came into power in Canada, you'd be handing them a fast-track process of canceling people's citizenship. It's both frightening and very, very preventable. Citizenship should be a 'right' rather than a 'privilege', and the stripping of it should always be done judicially.
Consider the consequences of taking citizenship from, let's say, terrorists. Start by defining "terrorist." Many politicians in the U.S. would say an abortion doctor is a terrorist. Could this misinterpretation happen in Canada? Yes, absolutely. Could Donald Trump say Hillary "terrorized" him during the election? If you're Trump you can say anything, but if he or someone like him became the PM of Canada and citizenship remained nothing more than a legislated privilege, their opponent could easily be labeled a terrorist. The system is ripe for abuse.

Now let's define terrorist as someone who'd kill fellow Canadians in the name of religion. What happens when Canada cancels their citizenship? Are they sent back to their country of origin only to once again terrorize and kill? Or should Canada lock them up and, if needed, throw away the key? One way sets a potential murderer free while the other keeps them in check whereby their location and behaviour is known and monitored. The latter scenario sounds more sensible.

And then what happens if a person gets stripped of their citizenship and it turns out the government, or in Canada's situation, a lone politician was wrong? (Maher Arar's citizenship didn't get questioned, but his rights were lost, all because our government wrongly believed he was a terrorist.) Think about sending a person like Arar into a known ISIS enclave, where they themselves become victims of terrorism.

I know only too well how difficult it is to regain status, and I never did anything wrong.

While Bill C-6 should become law, it's just the start. Canada's been abusing, some might even say 'terrorizing' Canadians with regards to citizenship since there's been a Canada. Both the House and Senate committees (House Citizenship committee and the Senate committee on Social Affairs, Science, and Technology) have issued recommendations calling for an entirely new, Charter-compliant citizenship act. That's the only real solution, but for now, short-term, C-6 should be put into law.

On a side note:

I'll end by saying that my group and I should be called to Ottawa to testify, not for a mere 20 minutes, but at minimum for a week. There's so much that's wrong about Canadian citizenship legislation, and most Parliamentarians hardly know anything about the issue. After Senator Roméo Dallaire was stripped of his Canadian citizenship, he said what happened to him was "bureaucratic terrorism," then went on to say the whole process of citizenship legislation and the loss of it where "inhumane." Former Senator Brenda Robertson's father- his citizenship is now being questioned; Former Senator Lorna Milne's mother had her citizenship disputed when her father was mayor of Toronto. No Canadian is immune.

Regrettably, this nonsense continues, and it won't go away till you Senators pick up the gauntlet and correct the problem. Right now there are stateless Canadians- even babies and Aboriginals. Gender can be a deciding factor in whether or not a person is a citizen. Various
Tiers of citizenship exist. One Canadian can have more rights than another, like immigrant Canadians having more rights than many Canadian-born Canadians. Currently there are two Lost Canadian families in Syria. Their brother and niece were killed in the war. Their sister and cousins are Canadian, but they are not. Same parents, same circumstances, different outcomes. Their situation is ongoing and is life and death. Why hasn't a Canadian welcome mat been extended to them as it's been for 39,000 others from Syria? Could it be their Canadian-citizenship connection kept them out?

In citizenship law, Canada is a country in violation of the Rule of Law, as well as several UN Human Rights Conventions. As Senators, are you okay with this? What if it were your own children or grandchildren being denied? Would you be okay with that? All remaining Lost Canadians need your voice.

Please, do a study on Canadian citizenship, and please, allow me and my group to testify. Finally, my book will give you much needed background on the issue. You can get it on Kindle:

**The Lost Canadians: A Struggle for Citizenship Rights, Equality, and Identity**

The latest Telus documentary on Lost Canadians:
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YR-ULnpcno](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YR-ULnpcno)

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thanks,

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[www.lostcanadian.com](http://www.lostcanadian.com)