

Oral Report to 102nd Annual National Convention
National Chairperson of Legislation Glenda Carson

There was much activity from a legislation perspective since the first session of the 44th Parliament resumed in 2022. The supply and confidence agreement between the Liberal and New Democratic parties was novel compared to traditional minority governments where coalitions may be formed, or cooperation occurs based on individual bills or business coming to the floor of the session. The agreement came with a promise for more legislative stability and positive action on items such as climate change, housing, and healthcare funding. It is uncertain how legislative concerns related to euthanasia and abortion will be affected. All of this begs close monitoring as the session proceeds.

Bill C-7 *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (medical assistance in dying)* came back into focus in the winter and spring of 2022. The required parliamentary committee was appointed to recommend safeguards for situations where mental illness is the sole underlying medical reason for the request for euthanasia. The national legislation spring parish council memo encouraged members to carefully monitor and critique the outcomes of the review. Ongoing concerns regarding the bill also remain, especially for Canadians living with disabilities and for emancipated minors.

In June 2022, the United States Supreme Court overturned the abortion law, *Roe versus Wade*, which had given Americans a constitutional right to abortion. A national legislation communique was released encouraging members to remain consistent and strong voices for parliamentarians to consider criminal code legislation regarding abortion and advocating for the recognition of unborn children as persons to be protected by law.

The legislation workshop, *Faith in Action*, was slow to be implemented last fall according to the 2021 legislation annual reports. Strategies are being explored that may be helpful in facilitating parish and other council levels to effectively use this valuable workshop. Knowledge regarding the often-complex parliamentary system is important if members are to remain active in monitoring and responding to legislation at all levels of government in Canada.

Despite the leadership challenges experienced with legislation standing committees across Canada, activity remained dynamic this year. Members wrote letters, signed petitions and supported briefs regarding legislation at national and provincial levels. Areas of particular concern included sex trafficking, legalization of prostitution, conversion therapy and environmental protection, especially for lakes and rivers.