

Sample Letter to MP

Dear _____,

Canada's priorities are dangerously skewed in favour of violent as opposed to nonviolent defence and security-building, as demonstrated by Canada's aggressive role in Afghanistan. Our increased military spending undermines real security. Working for reconciliation and harmony is the only way to creating true peace. Recognising the rights of conscientious objectors would be an important step towards changing Canada's priorities in a creative and constructive way.

To fight modern wars governments need to conscript our money, not our bodies. As Edith Adamson, founder of Conscience Canada, pointed out in 1982: "War now depends more on money than on personnel; it only took twelve men to drop the bomb over Hiroshima, but it took millions, perhaps billions, of taxpayers' dollars in Canada, Britain and the United States to develop that bomb."

We cannot in conscience bear arms ourselves, and paying someone else to do the killing in our name is equally objectionable. In today's world, the only sincere way to respect our right to freedom of conscience is to provide alternative service for the military portions of our taxes, just as alternative service was provided to conscientious objectors in the past.

In order for our Freedom of Conscience to have real meaning, those of us who cannot, in conscience, contribute to the military need to be able to direct the military portion of our taxes to non-military means of security-building. The Private Member's Bill C-363 (41st Parliament), "An Act respecting conscientious objection to the use of taxes for military purposes", would provide such a choice without in any way interfering with the government's fiscal powers. Since at present this is not yet the case and I cannot act against my conscience, I am sending the military portion of my taxes to Conscience Canada to be held in the Peace Tax Trust Fund.

I am asking you to work to bring such a tax bill to a vote in the House. Such a tax provision is needed in order for Canada to respect its commitment to guarantee the right to freedom of conscience laid out in our Charter and make Canada again a leader for peace.

Sincerely,
(Your signature and address)