

For Immediate Release from the CHRISTIAN LEGAL FELLOWSHIP

March 18, 2011

CLF GRANTED INTERVENER STATUS IN PROSTITUTION CHALLENGE AT COURT OF APPEAL

Toronto, ON – Intervener status has been granted to the Christian Legal Fellowship by the Ontario Court of Appeal in *Bedford v. Canada*, otherwise known as the Prostitution Challenge. The case was originally brought to the Superior Court of Ontario by three sex workers on the grounds that the *Criminal Code* provisions against operating a bawdy house, living off the avails of prostitution, or communicating for purposes of prostitution violated the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. It is now on appeal by the Attorneys General of Canada and Ontario.

As at the Superior Court, the Christian Legal Fellowship will intervene jointly with the Catholic Civil Rights League and REAL Women of Canada, filing arguments requesting the Court uphold the *Criminal Code* provisions in order to protect vulnerable individuals who may find themselves forced into prostitution. Specifically, the joint interveners will advance the position that morality is a constitutionally-permissible legislative objective and that the *Criminal Code* reflects the moral views of Canadians. Although the Attorneys General put morality into issue in the proceeding, no other party, including the six other approved interveners, brought this perspective to the matter.

Ruth Ross, CLF Executive Director and General Legal Counsel, stated, “We are grateful for another opportunity to demonstrate the legitimacy and importance of the *Criminal Code* provisions on prostitution. We are hopeful the Court will uphold the role of Parliament in Canadian democracy by overturning the decision of the Superior Court and allowing Parliament to address this inherently dangerous and complex issue. We ask Canadians to intercede for this case and for all of those who are impacted by prostitution.”

On September 28, 2010, the Superior Court of Ontario released its decision in *Bedford*, striking down the *Criminal Code* provisions as unconstitutional because they infringed ss. 2(b) and 7 of the *Charter* in a manner that could not be justified in a free and democratic society. The decision has been stayed pending the appeal. The Ontario Court of Appeal will be hearing arguments in mid-June.

For background information and to view written legal arguments, visit the Private Members Forum on our website at: <http://christianlegalfellowship.org/members.htm>

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For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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