

## Matthews, Rayanne

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**Subject:** FW: Urgent Concern Regarding Proposal to Revoke Religious Tax Exemption

**From:** Alain Lepine <[REDACTED]>

**Date:** October 3, 2023 at 6:50:38 AM GMT+9

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**Subject:** Urgent Concern Regarding Proposal to Revoke Religious Tax Exemption

Dear Council members of the city of Courtenay,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my deep concern regarding a proposal put forth by a city council member, Evan Jolicoeur, to revoke the religious tax exemption of two organizations, Aaron House Ministries and Youth for Christ Comox Valley. It is alarming to contemplate the idea that public officials may accuse religious and non-profit organizations without any evidence, relying solely on hearsay. Such actions would undoubtedly set a dangerous precedent, one that we must not allow to take root.

The proposition of revoking tax exemptions without substantial proof of hate or discrimination is a matter that should not be taken lightly. It is crucial that public officials uphold the principles of justice and fairness, ensuring that any allegations brought forward are supported by concrete evidence. To do otherwise would risk unjustly targeting religious and non-profit organizations, potentially causing irreparable harm.

We have a responsibility to ensure that accusations of hate and discrimination are thoroughly investigated, with due process and proper evidence-gathering procedures in place. It is only through these measures that we can safeguard against the misuse of power and protect the fundamental rights of all individuals and organizations involved.

Furthermore, I would like to emphasize that our organization, Aaron House, has been serving our community for the past 25 years, providing assistance to those in need, including drug addicts, the emotionally disturbed, and individuals requiring help in various ways. Throughout our history, we have never discriminated against anyone, but rather, we have consistently offered hope and support. Our mission has always been rooted in compassion, understanding, and the belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Hate has never been a part of our organization, and we have always strived to create an environment of acceptance and love.

The proposed actions, if allowed to proceed, could have a far-reaching impact on our society. It is essential that we stand together to oppose the notion of baseless accusations being used as a

means to target religious and non-profit organizations. By advocating for transparency, fairness, and the preservation of constitutional rights, we can prevent the establishment of a perilous precedent that undermines the fabric of our community.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my concerns. I sincerely hope that we can collectively work towards a society that upholds the values of truth, fairness, and respect for all.

Yours sincerely,

Alain Lepine  
Lead Pastor of Aaron House