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Law students call on Liberal government to suspend the Safe Third Country Agreement

MONTREAL - A law student Research-a-thon that took place early February [released its findings today](#), which suggest that Canada's continued participation in the Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) violates Canada's legal obligations. The report, which summarizes a portion of the research from the 845 Canadian Law Students who participated, calls on the Canadian government to suspend the STCA while a more rigorous review is conducted.

The STCA requires refugees in Canada and the US to apply for asylum in the first country they physically arrive in, unless they fall under certain exceptions. The STCA was premised on the idea that Canada and the US have comparable processes for asylum admissions. This report proves this assumption to be false.

The report focuses primarily on the troubling use of detention, widescale deportations, and lack of access to information and counsel in the US. It argues that Canada's continued participation in the STCA violates our domestic and international obligations.

The wellspring of energy and passion in support of refugees is a statement of the next generation of lawyer's fervent belief in upholding our international human rights obligations.

A letter dating back to January has collected over 400 signatures from law students, but was received with no response from the Liberal government. Canadian law students are [trying once more](#), but this time with a public report of their findings.

"Our research-a-thon had an incredible nationwide turnout in a matter of days," says Rachelle Bastarache, a third year McGill Law Student that helped organize the event. "The government should consider that response in light of the fact that these individuals are the future politicians and practitioners; those that will uphold the rule of law."

Given that the Trump administration continues to threaten hostile and erratic changes to its immigration policy, Canada should not continue to uphold this broken deal.

"For every day that the STCA remains law, the Government is silently endorsing President Trump's odious agenda." explains Brodie Noga, a recent McGill Law graduate.

The Government is understandably cautious about what messages it sends South in the lead up to what will be fraught negotiations over NAFTA. But the lives of refugees are not bargaining chips. At this moment of global uncertainty, Canada should send a crystal-clear message that its human rights obligations are non-negotiable.

To read the report please click here: <http://goo.gl/B40CBa>

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