

**Saskatoon:**

Unit 3, 844-51st St. East  
Saskatoon, SK S7K 5C7  
Tel (306) 975-4725  
Toll free (888) 844-8886  
Fax (306) 975-4728  
vellacott.mp@shawlink.ca

**Ottawa:**

Suite 610, Justice Bldg.  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Tel (613) 992-1899  
Fax (613) 992-3085  
Vellacott.M@parl.gc.ca  
www.mauricevellacott.ca

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CANADA

**Maurice Vellacott, MP**  
**Saskatoon-Wanuskewin**

## MP Vellacott laments free speech double standard at Carleton University

**For Immediate Release**

**October 8, 2010**

OTTAWA - Carleton University this week arrested five pro-life students who were hosting a public display about abortion on their own campus. These pro-life students were set up in an area of the campus where other groups have also held public events. Despite this, a University official claimed that the students were in a location where “no students are allowed to set up displays.” The students’ lawyer had to send a warning letter to the official over such inaccuracies, which reveal a double standard in the way Carleton is treating speech rights for pro-lifers.

“Free speech is a foundational principle for Canada’s free and democratic society. Academic freedom, a key aspect of freedom of speech, has long been protected and promoted in Canadian universities,” said Member of Parliament Maurice Vellacott. “

“I urge Carleton University to preserve speech freedom on their campus, to encourage dialogue and debate, rather than censorship, and to demonstrate integrity by treating these pro-life students in the same way they treat other student campaigners on campus,” added Vellacott.

These pro-life students, who had set up the large displays provided by the Genocide Awareness Project, are not coercing anyone on the matter of abortion. They are presenting to students a perspective on abortion that is often censored in the wider culture today. They are following in the footsteps of great civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King. And they are attempting to make use of Canada’s great tradition of academic freedom.

Similar conflicts are playing out on other university campuses across Canada. The GAP organizers have many testimonials from students who are grateful for their presence on campus, students who have expressed their appreciation for their contribution to a reasoned and responsible debate over abortion.

“University officials should show respect for, and confidence in, their students by allowing them to participate in this debate rather than censoring one side of the controversy,” said Vellacott.

– 30 –

**For further comment, call (613) 992-1966 or (613) 297-2249**