

*All-Party Parliamentary  
Group to End Modern  
Slavery and Human  
Trafficking*



*Groupe parlementaire  
multipartite de lutte contre  
l'esclavage moderne et la  
traite des personnes*

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## **All Party Group to End Slavery Announces Launch of Modern Slavery Bill**

February 5, 2020  
For Immediate Release

OTTAWA, ON - Today, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) to End Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking is pleased to announce the introduction of the *Modern Slavery Act* in the Senate. The legislation will be tabled in the Senate by APPG member Senator Julie Miville-Dechêne.

Modern slavery is deeply embedded in Canadian economic supply chains where it is out of sight from companies and consumers. If you have purchased shrimp, shopped for clothes, consumed chocolate, or bought products with lithium batteries then you may have inadvertently supported supply chains tainted with slavery.

The *Modern Slavery Act*, tabled in the previous Parliament by MP McKay after an extensive parliamentary study on child labour in supply chains, requires companies to report on the measures they are taking to prevent and reduce forced labour or child labour in their supply chains. The Act will also allow for a prohibition on the importation of products that are produced wholly or in part by forced labour or child labour. The adoption of this legislation will help to implement Canada's international commitment to slave-free supply chains and encourage companies to ensure their supply chains are transparent and free of goods produced by slavery if they wish to do business in Canada.

The APPG to End Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking was launched in 2018 and includes members from the Liberal, Conservative, and NDP parties as well as the Independent Senators Group. The activities of the APPG to End Modern Slavery are supported by a partnership with the Allard School of Law's International Justice and Human Rights Clinic at UBC.

### **Quotes**

"By requiring companies to be more transparent, this bill will give tools to consumers who do not want to contribute to modern slavery. We must stop being complicit in violating the rights of millions of people condemned to forced labour."

- *Senator Julie Miville-Dechêne*

"Slavery has not been relegated to history, it is still a scourge in the 21st century and Canadians unwittingly buy products made with slave labour. This bill will ensure that corporations examine their supply chains and certify that slaves had no part in the making of their products."

- *Hon. John McKay, P.C., M.P. for Scarborough-Guildwood, APPG Co-Chair*

“Modern day slavery and human trafficking exist in every country of the world including Canada. With over 25 million people around the world trapped in modern day slavery, we have a responsibility to tackle the slavery in our communities and in our supply chains.”

- *Arnold Viersen, M.P. for Peace River – Westlock, APPG Co-Chair*

“The Modern Slavery Act is a welcome first step towards bringing transparency to Canadian companies’ global supply chains. The next step is for the government to mandate due diligence requirements and effective oversight so the goals of preventing and reducing forced labour and child labour can be realized.”

- *Nicole Barrett, Director, International Justice and Human Rights Clinic, Peter A. Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia.*

“Willful blindness has gone on long enough. Over 24 million people, including many children, are victims of slavery around the world. If companies are required to provide a report, they will have to reflect on their actions, which is the first step toward accountability, which then sets the stage for going further.”

- *Laure Waridel, eco-sociologist, UQAM associate professor, co-founder of Équiterre and author of Acheter c’est voter*

## Quick Facts:

- About 40 million people are involved in modern slavery<sup>1</sup>. This is more than twice the number involved in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade.
- It is estimated over 1,200<sup>2</sup> companies operating in Canada are importing goods that have been produced by child or forced labor.
- In 2016, one in 10 children were engaged in some form of child labour<sup>3</sup>.

## For more information:

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<sup>1</sup> Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development & Subcommittee on International Human Rights, A Call to Action: Ending the Use of All Forms of Child Labour in Supply Chains, October 2018

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ibid