



Ontario
Civil Liberties
Association

"The OCLA takes a vigorous and highly principled approach to defending free speech rights, which is an approach that is sorely needed in Canada today."

— John Carpay,
President,
Justice Centre for
Constitutional Freedoms

"I am very pleased to learn of the Ontario Civil Liberties Association, and wish it the greatest success in its work, which could not be more timely and urgent as elementary civil rights, including freedom of speech, are under attack in much of the world, not excluding the more free and democratic societies."

— Noam Chomsky,
Institute Professor, MIT

"Freedom of expression is our most fundamental and most precious freedom. It has been under attack in Canada for years. The Ontario Civil Liberties Association has taken a position on freedom of expression that is both courageous and principled. The OCLA now stands alone and its position should be supported by all Canadians who cherish democracy and freedom."

— Robert Martin,
Professor of Law,
Emeritus,
Western University

ocla.ca



August 22, 2013

By mail and email

The Honourable Chris Alexander, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister:

The Ontario Civil Liberties Association (OCLA) is an organization formed to defend civil liberties at a time when fundamental freedoms are subjected to a real and palpable systemic erosion in all spheres of social life. We oppose institutional decisions that remove from the individual his or her personal liberty or exclude the individual from participation in the democratic functions of society.

We are writing to express our deep concerns about the potential deportation of Mr. Deepan Budlakoti and the serious violation of his civil liberties this would entail.

Mr. Budlakoti was born in Ottawa, Canada, has lived his entire life in Canada, and his entire family are Canadian citizens and reside in Canada. Nonetheless, he faces deportation to India, a country he has never lived in.

While serving a sentence for a criminal conviction, Mr. Budlakoti was told that his Canadian passport was issued in error due to his parents' employment at the time of his birth, pursuant to section 3(2) of the *Citizenship Act*. Although Mr. Budlakoti's parents and siblings are all Canadian citizens, the process to have him deported was initiated upon cancellation of his passport. Because India has refused to accept Mr. Budlakoti if he is deported, the removal of his passport has made him a stateless person.

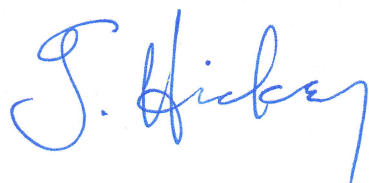
The Ministry of Immigration's decision to subject a born and raised Canadian to detention, strict bail conditions, house arrest, and an arduous legal appeals process which could result in deportation to a foreign country is extremely disturbing. Canada's laws are not meant to be instruments used to single out, persecute, and exile Canadians who have received criminal convictions. Rather, the civil liberties of all members of a free and democratic society must be upheld if civil liberties are to mean anything at all.

We support Mr. Budlakoti's application to remain in Canada on humanitarian and compassionate considerations, and we urge you to immediately restore Mr.

Budlakoti's passport and see to reparations for his damage suffered as a result of the deportation process thus far.

Furthermore, we urge you to introduce legislation and/or binding directives in order to prevent such an egregious violation of a Canadian's civil liberties from occurring in the future, and we ask that you make a strong and informative public statement confirming your actions to correct the injustices against Mr. Budlakoti.

Yours sincerely,



Joseph Hickey
Executive Director
Ontario Civil Liberties Association (OCLA) <http://www.ocla.ca>
613-252-6148 (c)
joseph.hickey@ocla.ca

Cc: Justice for Deepan Budlakoti support committee (by email: justicefordeepan@gmail.com)
Cc: Members of Parliament (by email)