

NOVEMBER 15th, 2010: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## STUDENTS' PRO-LIFE CLUB STATUS REVOKED

Carleton Lifeline told by student union it must change its constitution

OTTAWA – The Carleton University Student Association (CUSA) has notified Carleton Lifeline, Carleton University's pro-life student group, that the club will not be given club status or funding unless the group renounces its pro-life beliefs in a revised and resubmitted Club Constitution.

This comes on the heels of the arrest of several Carleton Lifeline club members' arrest last month when they attempted to set up a pro-life exhibit on campus.

"There are two major issues at hand here," stated Ruth Lobo, president of Carleton Lifeline. "First, is that we are being discriminated against because of our political and ideological values. Second, CUSA has taken our club status away in a way that has violated their own procedural policies regarding re-certification and decertification. We have been a club for 3 years, so why now?"

The club was notified of the denial of status via e-mail from Khaldoon A. Bushnaq, Vice-President of Internal Affairs for CUSA. The email states that Carleton Lifeline's club constitution is in violation of CUSA's Discrimination on Campus Policy, which expressly states that CUSA supports "a woman's right to choose" and will not support any student group that holds a different viewpoint. Carleton Lifeline's constitution reads "Carleton Lifeline believes in the equal rights of the unborn and firmly believes that abortion is a moral and legal wrong, not a constitutional right. Therefore, Carleton Lifeline shall work to promote the legal protection of the unborn and their basic human rights to life."

"Our constitution has not changed since our club was first certified in 2007," said James Shaw, vice-president of Carleton Lifeline. "We have always received funding and status whenever we applied, and were always re-certified as a club from year to year." Shaw adds that even if other students disagree with their views, a student's association must respect the diversity of opinion within their own membership.

On November 15, 2010, Carleton Lifeline's legal counsel wrote CUSA pointing out that their Discrimination on Campus Policy is in violation of CUSA's own constitution and in violation of a number of Carleton University policies. He also pointed out that the manner in which CUSA denied Carleton Lifeline certification was not in line with CUSA's own policies and procedures.

“We simply want the same status as other clubs without viewpoint discrimination,” stated club member Nicholas Mcleod. “This decision clearly violates CUSA’s own procedures on certification and re-certification. As a student, I am forced to give money to CUSA when I pay my tuition which means that I am paying CUSA to discriminate against me. Obviously, our group is going to challenge this.”

For further information, contact Carleton Lifeline at (613) 600-4791, or Carleton Lifeline’s legal counsel, Albertos Polizogopoulos at (613) 241-2701. To see copies of the above-noted correspondence, please visit <http://carletonlifeline.wordpress.com/>