



Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter

全加華人協進會 (平權會) 多倫多分會

Dorset Park Community Hub, 1911 Kennedy Rd #105 Toronto, ON M1P 2L9

**Serious Concerns about Racial Profiling and Enforcement of Chinese Canadian Holistic Practitioners and Holistic Businesses**

April 23, 2018

Dear Mayor John Tory and City of Toronto Councillors:

We are writing from the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNC Toronto), an organization serving the Chinese Canadians community for the past 35 years, promoting equity, social justice & diversity in the City of Toronto through community & civic engagement, and public education initiatives. Our community organizing, programmes, and projects range from successfully pushing the Government of Canada to provide a comprehensive redress to head-tax survivors to everyday support of people the Chinese Canadian community whether they are new immigrants, or long time Canadian citizens that have been helping to build Canada as a country. Within our membership includes thousands of Chinese Canadian residents in Toronto that include small business owners, professionals, workers, union members, newcomers, and community members from all walks of life.

Today we write to you regarding our deep concerns about the direction of licensing issue faced by holistic practitioners, many of whom are from the Chinese Canadian community. On April 10th, the Municipal Licensing and Standards Committee met to discuss the issue of holistic practitioner licensing. Our organization had also put forward a submission. During the meeting, many front line holistic workers, small business owners, and community organizations that work with these groups of workers put forward concerns regarding the direction of licensing, the racially targeted pattern of enforcement and the serious abuses by some enforcement officials.

We want to emphasize what has been recounted is in the research of frontline organizations and in the experiences of workers and small business owners in the community. There is evidence to suggest that there is a racial profiling problem specifically aimed at Chinese holistic practitioners. This ranges from deeply disrespectful conduct during inspections (some of which include sexual harassment and violations of human rights) to overzealous licensing and over enforcement of holistic businesses operated and owned by Chinese Canadians. **Based on these allegations, we urge the city council to halt the upcoming proposal happening on Tuesday, April 24 which would refuse new licences to 5 holistic associations the membership of which are predominantly from the Chinese Canadian community. The issue of discriminatory and/or abusive bylaw enforcement must be investigated before any more coercive enforcement measures should be taken.**

Holistic practitioners are a very important part of the Chinese Canadian community. This industry employs thousands of people, and contrary to tremendously misguided assessments of some, has no evidence to show it has connection to any sort of human trafficking. The current issue being debated in regards to the temporary halting of licensing would bring extreme damage to this industry and workers employed therein. While it may appear that the justification for stopping application for new licenses to 5 members of Holistic Association is based on the fact that these associations account for a majority of the violations, however, on a much more thorough and careful review of evidence brought about by the *Holistic Practitioners Alliance* and *The Coalition Against Abuse By Bylaw Enforcement* suggest that these numbers are high because of what appears to be a pattern of overzealous targeted enforcement that has

seen these industries as ‘suspect’ and thereby out excessive fines often based on unreasonable standards. The mistreatment of this group is intimately connected with their social location as marginalized immigrants, and importantly in the process of enforcement due to the fact that many holistic workers speak limited English. As such, the type of policing and ticketing abuse that holistic practitioners and small business owners have experienced and recounted to us shows that the legitimacy of these violations may be severely compromised and also represents a potential violation of human rights under Ontario Human Rights Code. There seems to be no reasonable justification for proceeding with this policy. As such The Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto puts forward the following recommendations:

1. The mayor and city councillors should direct the MLS and Toronto Police Service to formally investigate, review, and take immediate action to stop the abuse, misconduct and retribution by bylaw enforcement officers and police officers as against holistic practitioners;
2. The mayor and city councillors should ensure that complaints against bylaw enforcement from holistic practitioners are properly investigated, ensuring the safety of the complainant;
3. The mayor and city councillors should direct the Executive Director of MLS to end all policies and practices that lead to excessive and discriminatory inspections and prosecutions of holistic centers and practitioners;
4. City council should remove the moratorium on the issuance of new licenses to holistic practitioner applicants associated with five restricted professional health associations until after a comprehensive review of the current bylaw and policies on holistic practices
5. City councillors should ensure that the comprehensive review of current bylaw and policies on holistic practices is conducted with meaningful participation of owners, practitioners, and other stakeholders of holistic centres and body-rub parlours.

In summary, many of us in the Chinese Canadian community are very concerned about the conditions facing holistic and body rub practitioners. We do not believe the values of the city of Toronto, of residents of Toronto and of elected official in Toronto are in line with the mistreatment faced by holistic practitioners and as such we ask that you and city council take swift and decisive action to ensure this unjust and unfair treatment facing holistic workers does not continue.

Sincerely,

Rain Chan,  
Executive

Director

Justin Kong  
Community Organizer