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For Immediate Release

## **Alliance for the Defence of Canadian Sovereignty Asks U.S. State Department to Suspend Citizenship Renunciation Fee Increase**

United States citizenship is imposed on many Canadian citizens and residents without their consent. To be released from U.S. citizenship, and its many obligations selectively targeting U.S. citizens living abroad, the U.S. imposes a variety of preconditions, fees, and even an “exit tax” penalty. Now the U.S. State Department has declared an unprecedented five-fold increase in the consular fee for renunciation of U.S. citizenship, from U.S. \$450 to U.S. \$2,350, without any advance notice or opportunity for prior input usually required for changes in administrative policies.

“This is yet another unwarranted obstacle, especially for low income Canadians, to afford the cost of renunciation” said Dr. Stephen Kish, Chair of the Alliance for the Defence of Canadian Sovereignty.

This week James Butera, a Washington D.C. attorney with Jones Walker LLP, submitted on behalf of the Alliance a request to the U.S. Department of State that it immediately suspend the fee increase. The letter traces the right of citizenship renunciation to the Expatriation Act of 1868 stating that “the right of expatriation is a natural and inherent right of all people” and that any action “which denies, restricts, impairs, or questions the right of expatriation, is declared inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the Republic”. The clear reading of this statute and its modern incorporation in additional federal law and Supreme Court cases argues that any renunciation fee including especially the new \$2,350 fee is an impermissible burden on the fundamental human right to voluntarily surrender citizenship.

The Alliance letter notes that the State Department violated the “Administrative Procedure Act” by imposing the fee increase without proper notice and opportunity for prior comment. The submission argues that “It is an exaggeration with no rational basis to claim that the announced increase in the fee is ‘critical to national security’” given the small revenues (less than one-tenth of one percent) to be obtained relative to the annual \$50 billion budget of the State Department.

“Why then did the State Department impose the massive fee increase? I believe it did so, to discourage the rising number of individuals simply seeking to free themselves of all the additional obligations and filing requirements being placed on U.S. citizens living abroad” added Dr. Kish.

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