



The Hon. Ahmed Hussen
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
365 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1L1

January 23rd, 2018

Dear Minister Hussen,

On behalf of the Canadian Association of Professional Immigration Consultants (CAPIC) and our members, please accept our best wishes for the New Year. I hope you are enjoying a restful, deserved holiday break.

As the association representing Canada's immigration consulting industry, I can assure you that many of our Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC) members are actively following developments pertaining to the future governance of our industry. We are emboldened by the support expressed by all political parties to address unauthorized practitioners, and the need to inform the public of the threat they pose to the immigration system. We agree with MPs, and your government, that these unlawful individuals undermine not just the good work done by our professionals, but the system as a whole.

At the same time, our members have also expressed frustration and concern with statements made by critics of the profession and other immigration service providers who seek to lump together the actions of our RCIC members with these same unlawful individuals. It is because of this frustration that I am writing to you today, in an attempt to clarify misinformation about our profession that continues to circulate and to provide an opportunity to discuss any questions you may have.

As you know, Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCICs) are Authorized Representatives under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA), working alongside lawyers and notaries. There are over 4,000 regulated immigration consultants operating in Canada and abroad, serving hundreds of thousands of immigrant and citizenship seekers every year. RCICs are an important part of Canada's immigration system, and an important service provider for the Government of Canada in meeting annual immigration targets.

Our consultants are put through extensive training and testing in order to become certified, and are governed by strict codes of conduct designed to protect consumers. While some critics of the profession suggest that immigration consultants are not adequately trained, that could not be further from the truth. In fact, our representatives are put through hours of training and required to complete ongoing training to ensure they are up to speed on all changes to immigration policies and programs.

To our disappointment, inaccurate information continues to circulate with specific regard to the number of complaints made annually against RCICs. We have attached to this letter a series of charts, which compare an increase in membership to complaints made against RCICs over several years; you will note that the number of complaints received against RCICs has gradually decreased. Additionally, research we have undertaken demonstrates that the number of complaints made to our regulator against RCICs (which



has existed for just over six years) is comparable to that of other professions based on size of membership; most notably the Law Society of Upper Canada (LSUC), which was established in 1797.

Our association fully acknowledges that there is room for improvement in our profession. That is why we are working in lockstep with your department to improve customer service, client protection, and how the profession is governed and regulated. This includes working with all stakeholders to optimally address the challenges posed by Unauthorized Immigration Practitioners (UAPs), who undermine the integrity of our profession and threaten consumer protection. Specifically, we will be working in the coming weeks with immigration stakeholders on an appropriate path toward addressing UAPs and improving consumer communication and access to information.

We look forward to working with all involved to address this problem as we move into 2018 and beyond.

We understand that some third-party stakeholders are pressing for immigration applications to be the exclusive domain of immigration lawyers. Ultimately, we believe this view is short-sighted, self-serving, and that it ignores the important role RCICs play in the immigration system. We feel it is paramount that immigration stakeholders work together rather than against one another. This will ensure that we get the best outcomes possible to preserve the integrity of the immigration system, for applicants and for Canadians.

Thank you again for your continued collaboration and please accept our best wishes for the New Year.

Respectfully,

Donald Igbokwe, BA Hons, MA, CIP, RCIC
President, CAPIC-ACCPI

P.S. Enclosed is a memorandum which was sent to IRCC regarding complaints filed against RCICs.