

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

Greetings from all of us at Srishti Foundation

Hope this email finds you all doing well.

Srishti Foundation in Canada, is a registered not-for-profit organization, founded in 2012. **Srishti** in Sanskrit means “creation”. Srishti is about the creation of a more vibrant, more giving society and inculcating a sense of Seva (selfless service) in our next generation. [Check out](#) our quiet but impactful work over the years, on the ground with a hallmark of inclusivity and diversity, including Diwali & Holi celebrations in downtown London.

It is very unfortunate to learn that the City of London is considering a ban on backyard fireworks for now, with some proponents, we understand, who want it banned altogether, which in effect makes Option B, a foot in the door and a slippery slope.

While Option B under your consideration will essentially eliminate or deny the rights to Londoners to have vibrant celebrations on a little over a couple of important days for Canadians, especially children, and turn these into another set of drab celebrations, minus the vibrancy, cheer and joyousness.

For Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and some Buddhists, in London, it also means

- Denying them a very important ritual in a family setting that is an integral part of Diwali from time immemorial.
- Denying young Londoners growing up the memories of a joyous festival at home.
- Eventually erase this ritual for good, for a family centric festival.

Proponents of Option B who highlight availability of Permits, haven't considered family celebrations at home or the fact that for people without the language, advocacy skills, single families and low SES families, it would be near impossible to navigate the bureaucracy and afford the costs of getting a backyard fireworks permit.

It is so easy to erase away traditions and rituals with a single stroke of a pen or a vote, at the behest of vested interests or a well organized vocal minority, while ironically we talk about preserving traditions and culture etc.

All of the above will dent the City's commitment to honour and preserve cultural traditions and diversity in London.

We are fully committed to upholding the well-being of our city and its inhabitants and to this end, offer to educate our community about responsible and safe firework usage and participate in the cleanup efforts after the celebrations.

The few bad apples, who violate rules and create mischief during these celebrations can and need to be dealt with. Instead let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater.

Sincerely,

For Srishti Foundation

Vinod Varapravan