

WAR RESISTERS SUPPORT CAMPAIGN

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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, March 24, 2009

Opposition MPs unite to support U.S. Iraq War resister Kimberly Rivera

OTTAWA—Opposition Members of Parliament Maurizio Bevilacqua (Vaughan), Olivia Chow (Trinity-Spadina) and Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber), will speak at a press conference on the eve of the deportation of U.S. Iraq War resister Kimberly Rivera to call on the Canadian government to intervene to suspend her deportation to the United States. The parliamentarians will speak to measures being pursued to compel Immigration Minister Jason Kenney to align government actions with the views of Parliament and Canadians.

Kimberly Rivera, a former U.S. soldier, deployed to Iraq in the fall of 2006. While home on leave she decided she could no longer participate in the war. She and her family sought refuge in Canada in January 2007. Kimberly, her husband Mario and their three children – including a Canadian born daughter – have been ordered to leave Canada by March 26 or face deportation.

EVENT: Press conference in support of Iraq War resister Kimberly Rivera
DATE: Wednesday, March 25, 2009
TIME: 12:30 p.m. ET
LOCATION: Charles Lynch Room 130-S, Centre Block, Parliament Hill

“The Conservative government wants to separate this mother from her infant child, and send her to a military prison for having made the tough decision to follow her conscience,” said Maurizio Bevilacqua, Liberal Immigration critic. “All this for opposing the Iraq War – a war which Mr. Harper agrees was “absolutely an error’.”

“When Iraq War resister Robin Long was deported from Canada by this government, he was sentenced to 15 months in prison and received a felony conviction,” said Olivia Chow, NDP Immigration critic. “It is time for the Harper Conservatives to respect the will of Parliament and let war resisters stay.”

Bloc Québécois Immigration critic Thierry St-Cyr stated, “I salute the courage which Kimberly and the other war resisters have demonstrated. By their actions, they are defending the principles of international law and humanitarianism. They should be welcomed, not deported to certain punishment.”

Kimberly Rivera, who will also speak at the press conference, stated: “Our sincere hope is that Mr. Harper will find it in his heart to let my family stay in this beautiful country. We have been welcomed here by so many Canadians who understand why we took the stand that we did.”

On June 3, 2008 the House of Commons directed the Canadian government not to deport war resisters and to implement a program to facilitate permanent resident status for them. The House’s direction was [re-affirmed by the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration](#) on February 12, 2009. A public opinion poll conducted by Angus Reid Strategies last June found that 64 per cent of Canadians want the government to allow Iraq War resisters to become permanent residents of Canada.

-30-

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