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Dear Mr. Mayor and Members of Council:

I am writing to express my concern and opposition to the City entering into negotiations with Cardus for the lease of a public asset.

As a citizen, tax payer, and business owner, I strongly object to the City entering into any business relationship with, including extending public assets, religious organizations, let alone an organization with a history of offensive discrimination and bias towards minorities, and one whose primary goal is to undermine the foundations of Canadian democracy.

Cardus proudly states that their goal is to challenge Canada's secular, pluralist character by influencing and injecting religious values and doctrine into every aspect of Canadian life. They have vigorously criticized the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, called for the abolishment of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and relentlessly pursue a hierarchy of rights in which religious freedoms take priority over other fundamental rights.

Much of their 'research' and material contains language and conclusions that are undeniably racist, homophobic, misogynistic, anti-union, anti-pro-choice, Islamophobic.

Beyond my personal and moral objections, a clear and verifiable history of questionable material and associations from Cardus activities could leave the City vulnerable to litigation under the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

It is without doubt that should the City enter into a business relationship with an organization like Cardus, many community interests from labour, anti-racist groups, LGBT, pro-choice groups, women's rights, public school advocates, and others, will mount a series of legal challenges against the City.

I would like to draw your attention to just one example of highly questionable material and connections from Cardus that should prompt you to carefully consider the suitability of the City entering into any sort of legal or financial relationship with them:

Anti-immigrant and racist

Keep 43 is an organization was formed around Section 43 of the Criminal Code and deals with spanking children. The website of this group promotes a book called "Sweden: A Canary in a Coal Mine: How the Abolition of Traditional Parenting Ultimately Destroys Society". This book

includes passages that blame African immigrants for “replacing the Rule of Law” with “tribal law” and concludes that “Sweden to become a Third World Country by 2030” due to “societal decline with increasing violence and dysfunction”.

Cardus is a sponsor of this group and also contributed material to their website.

Source: <<https://www.keep43.ca/whats-new/>>

Please keep in mind that it is the legal and moral responsibility of City Councillors to ensure that municipal processes and decisions respect the human rights of all community members. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing requires municipalities to observe and respect the Ontario Human Rights Code:

Elected municipal representatives are not exempt from the [Ontario Human Rights] Code – they have a legal duty to not discriminate, and they are elected to represent all of their constituents.”
— Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2012

“Local governments also play a key role in the promotion and protection of the rights of individuals belonging to particular groups. The rights of persons at risk of discrimination must be carefully addressed at the local level, not least because local governments deliver services directly to such individuals and can inadvertently become a party to intersecting patterns of discrimination.”

— Local Government and Human Rights, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2019.

Understanding how Cardus operates and what their interests are requires one to look beyond the slick website and scholarly language. It requires effort and sophistication to decipher their true intentions. These interests are in direct conflict with ensuring the rights and dignity of the citizens of Hamilton.

I urge you not to vote in favour of entering into negotiations with Cardus.

Respectfully,

Michael Demone