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24 Shevat 5782

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett
Prime Minister's Office
3 Kaplan St., Kiryat Ben-Gurion
Jerusalem, Israel
via email

Minister Matan Kahana
National Authority of Religious Services
7 Kanfei Nesharim
Jerusalem, Israel

To the Honorable Prime Minister and Religious Affairs Minister:

We write to join, on behalf of the over 2,000 members of the Rabbinic Circle of the Coalition for Jewish Values, the worldwide opposition to the proposed conversion reform bill presented by Religious Affairs Minister Matan Kahana on behalf of the current government, as expressed to you by Chief Rabbis, Rabbinical Courts, and global rabbinic organizations.


Halacha is not ours to modify, but to follow. No lobbying efforts by heterodox and liberal Orthodox organizations, following their long-standing agenda to undermine neutral and foundational *Halachic* standards, can change that reality. Neither can Knesset legislation.


The Chief Rabbinate insists only upon an honest, comprehensive and demonstrable acceptance and unequivocal commitment to all of the Torah's commandments. This is not their innovation, but the position of the *Shulchan Aruch* (Code of Jewish Law), Maimonides, and the overwhelming consensus of Halachic authorities.

If individual rabbis are permitted to contrive their own standards for conversion, no observant court in the Jewish world will be able to accept an Israeli conversion certificate as proof of Jewish status. This legislation would reduce such a certificate to a useless bit of bureaucratic paperwork. No observant rabbi would be able to marry a couple in which either partner relies upon one to prove his or her Jewish bona fides.

In other words, this legislation would cause a catastrophic rupture of the current close working relationship between Israel and the mainstream rabbis around the globe charged with conversion and confirmation thereof. This is not a political issue, but one which will impact both the Israel-Diaspora relationship and Jewish unity itself for generations to come. We urge you to immediately abandon this ill-conceived plan, in light of its obvious and permanent consequences.

Yours Sincerely,


Rabbi Avrohom Gordimer
Chairman, Rabbinic Circle


Rabbi Steven Pruzansky
Israel Regional Vice-President