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### **Harper government playing political games with cancer patient care**

OTTAWA – In the face of growing criticism over the Harper government's mishandling of the medical isotope shortage and cancer testing crisis, the Harper Conservatives are preventing leading nuclear and medical experts from testifying at today's committee meeting.

"The Harper government isn't living up to its responsibility to protect the health of Canadians by mismanaging this preventable crisis," said Liberal Natural Resources Critic Geoff Regan. "And now, in an attempt to shield Canadians from their incompetence, they are trying to muzzle the experts with the best knowledge about the supply shortage and its consequences on their activities."

The Conservatives refused to hear from witnesses including:

- Jill Chita, MDS Nordion
- Normand Laurin, Nuclear Physician, Trois-Rivieres Regional Hospital
- Francois Lamoureux, President, Quebec Association of Nuclear Medical Specialists
- Albert Driedger, Emeritus Professor, University of Western Ontario
- Jean-Luc Urbain, President, Canadian Association of Nuclear Medicine

Mr. Regan and Liberal Health Critic Carolyn Bennett said the committee needs to hear from those involved from every aspect of the isotope supply chain through to front-line medical delivery in order to properly assess the best way forward to ensure Canadians get the tests and treatments they need.

"Health specialists have indicated that cancer patients face a dire situation, but the Conservatives have manoeuvred to make this meeting as short as possible on a Friday afternoon – and without the presence of those who see the human face of Conservative mismanagement every day," said Dr. Bennett.

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