

However, for Canadian politicians, the repercussions for voicing those same views publicly can differ, experts say.

It is not the case that a politician forgoes the right to freedom of expression — they still have that right. Rather, as a Member of Parliament or Provincial Parliament, they are also bound to certain constitutional conventions, Jonathan Rose, associate professor of Canadian Politics at Queen's University, said.

Let's break it down, based on the most recent example.

On Jan. 15, York Centre Progressive Conservative MPP Roman Baber issued a public letter to Ontario Premier Doug Ford, expressing his views in opposition of the current lockdown measures being implemented by the Ontario government.

Lockdowns are deadlier than Covid. I wrote a respectful letter to Premier Ford, asking to end the Lockdown. Look @ the data -the virus is real but the crisis is mostly in LTC. Let's focus on LTC & hospital capacity, but ending the Lockdown is best for our health.#onpoli #cdnpoli
pic.twitter.com/IluvB7OXQo — Roman Baber (@Roman_Baber) January 15, 2021

Less than two hours later, Baber was **removed from caucus** and Ford noted he “will not be permitted to seek re-election as a PC member.”

But why was this the course of action and does it stifle Baber's right to freedom of expression?

“A lot of people confuse the ability to do something with the legitimacy of that action,” Rose said. “Whether he was able to do it or not, I think, is besides the fact that he should not have done it.”

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Rose explained that, as a citizen, a MPP does have free speech rights that they can exercise; however, being in the role of MPP means they are also bound by certain restraints and rules — one being caucus solidarity.