

Supreme Court to hear Quebec's challenge to daycare access for asylum seekers ^[1]

Quebec government lost case in both Court of Appeal and lower court

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AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

Excerpts

The Supreme Court of Canada has agreed to hear a challenge from the Quebec government to a lower court ruling granting asylum seekers access to subsidized daycare spaces.

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Quebec's highest court ruled that asylum seekers who hold a valid work permit are entitled to register their children in the public daycare system.

The case originated with a woman from the Democratic Republic of Congo who applied for asylum and obtained a work permit, but her three children were denied access to the heavily subsidized daycare network. They were denied because Quebec's rules provided access to the system only once refugee status was granted by the federal government.

Spaces in the highly sought-after network cost roughly \$9 a day.

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On the X platform, Roy said those spots would cost \$300 million in infrastructure investments, \$120 million in subsidies and an additional 900 early childhood educators.

However, Carole Senneville, president of the CSN union, said in a statement Thursday the government is engaging in the "judicial harassment" of asylum seekers. The province, she added, has not followed through on a promise to build sufficient capacity in the daycare network.

She says the solutions to the problem are known and "targeting asylum seekers is not one of them. What is needed is more places in early childhood centres and in family educational daycare services."

The Supreme Court decision on Thursday comes as Quebec is pressuring the federal government to transfer half of the asylum seekers in the province elsewhere in Canada.

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Related link: Quebec Court of Appeal rules asylum seekers can get subsidized daycare ^[3]

Quebec asylum seekers navigate legal battle for child care benefits, while other provinces forge ahead ^[4]

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