

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

1ST SESSION, 44TH LEGISLATURE, ONTARIO
4 CHARLES III, 2026

Bill 118

An Act to proclaim the month of May as Buddhist Heritage Month

Co-sponsors:

MPP A. Gilmour

Mr. T. Rakocevic

Private Members' Bill

1st Reading May 14, 2026

2nd Reading

3rd Reading

Royal Assent



An Act to proclaim the month of May as Buddhist Heritage Month

Preamble

Canada is home to over 300,000 adherents of the Buddhist faith, over half of whom live in Ontario. For over 100 years, Buddhists have made significant contributions to Ontario's social, cultural and spiritual fabric, helping to foster unity and interfaith harmony through teachings of compassion, nonviolence and the oneness of humanity.

Buddhism is one of the world's oldest spiritual traditions, founded over 2500 years ago. It is practiced across Asia and beyond, including in India, Tibet, China, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Thailand, and encompasses diverse traditions such as Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana.

Buddhism is a growing faith in Canada, with numerous meditation centres, temples and dharma communities across all provinces and territories. Ontario's Buddhist communities offer a wide range of valuable services, from mindfulness programs in schools, workplaces, healthcare facilities and community centres, to support for vulnerable populations, educational programs on Buddhist philosophy and ethics and interfaith dialogue that fosters tolerance and understanding.

In the month of May, many Buddhists celebrate Vesak, commemorating Gautama Buddha's birth, enlightenment and attainment of final Nirvana. The most sacred observance for millions of Buddhists worldwide, Vesak is marked through reflection, acts of generosity and community gatherings. By proclaiming May as Buddhist Heritage Month, the Province of Ontario recognizes Buddhism's role in Ontario's spiritual and cultural landscape and celebrates the unique faith, traditions and history of Buddhists in Ontario and around the world.

Therefore, His Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

Buddhist Heritage Month

1 The month of May in each year is proclaimed as Buddhist Heritage Month.

Commencement

2 This Act comes into force on the day it receives Royal Assent.

Short title

3 The short title of this Act is the *Buddhist Heritage Month Act, 2026*.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Bill proclaims the month of May in each year as Buddhist Heritage Month.