
From: Dawn Peters <dawnpeters71@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 01, 2014 4:07 PM
To: Office
Cc: inquiry@nsgeu.ca
Subject: FW: law amendments
Attachments: law amendments.docx

To Whom It May Concern,

Given that I have not been afforded an opportunity to speak to the Law Amendment Committee, please forward the attached letter to the committee.

Sincerely,
Dawn Peters

From: Dawn.Peters@pcha.nshealth.ca
To: dawnpeters71@hotmail.com
Date: Wed, 1 Oct 2014 14:18:39 -0300
Subject: law amendments

Oct 1st, 2014

Dear Honourable Members of the Nova Scotia Legislature,

My name is Dawn Peters and I am a social worker who has worked for Addiction Services for the past 19 years, and consequently, I have also been an active member of the NSGEU for the same amount of time.

Let me first say that I am very disappointed that I have not received a response to the email directed to the Minister of Health and it was sent three days ago. This makes me feel very disrespected and invalidated. To add insult to injury, I have also had my voice silenced by not being allowed to voice my concerns and deliver this message in person. Sadly, this letter is my only recourse and I hope it has not been written in vain.

Let me second say that I understand all of the fiscal concerns facing our healthcare system. I make it a point to understand, and I know it is difficult to make sound decisions to ensure that there is long term sustainability. That is why I accept the merging of the health authorities to streamline costs. I do not take issue with this. What I do take issue with is the blatant violation of my democratic rights as a union member who has a negotiated contract and the right to decide who I am governed by.

I am gravely concerned about the proposed legislation that has been put forth on Monday September the 29th regarding dictating to public service healthcare workers which union will be representing them and I implore it is amended to allow for the unions to have a run-off vote. That is the only fair and legal choice.

I am outraged by the disrespect for democratic process and flagrant disrespect for public service workers. This legislation is not only unconstitutional but has dismal far reaching effects for the labour movement in our province and our country. What is even more shameful is that the four unions affected have worked in a very solution focused way to come to agreements on how to make the merging changes work for everyone, including the creation of four bargaining

units, only to be completely dismissed and shut out of the conversation and process. This solution has worked in the past in other parts of this country.

I have been a proud NSGEU member for the past 19 years and I have never seen such bold faced dictatorship. It is my right to choose who represents me and if this government is so hell bent on rejecting the master agreement that the unions put forth, I feel that the government has no legal recourse, but to hold run off votes and let the public service workers choose who it is that they have represent them. That's democracy and that is fair and just.

Otherwise, it becomes very clear and obvious that the real issue at hand is not about streamlining services; it becomes a blatant message of attacking the labour movement and raping workers of their negotiated contracts that have been achieved over decades!

At this time, I have no choice but to question whether those making these inane decisions are lacking proper guidance on respectful and lawful labour relations. I urge this government to recant this decision and bring democracy back to this province. I have the right to choose my union and it needs to be put to a vote!

I am gravely concerned about the effect any continued labour unrest will have on the quality of patient care and safety and am equally concerned about the future ramifications that denying democracy will have on this province and the impending legal and financial hardships that will result. To move forward with this legislation as it is, is negligent and irresponsible. Not only that, this legislation, if not amended, will undeniably result in irreparable shortages of staff, as there are people already making plans to resign and work elsewhere. We are a dying economy as it is, with an aging population, we need our workers here. Please consider the exorbitant costs of denying the right to vote.

I do not support any legislation that will result in health care workers being forced into a union without having the opportunity to vote. I do not support having someone else's contract being imposed upon me with no opportunity to negotiate or vote its acceptance. When I am given the opportunity to vote and if I were then to end up with another union, I can peacefully respect

that; that is the democratic process. I cannot respect Bill 1 without this crucial amendment. I want the right to choose my union and I deserve the right to vote.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these concerns.

Sincerely,

Dawn Peters, B.A., B.S.W., R.S.W.