

Dear Mrs. Miller,

I am writing to express my disappointment with Bill 148. I am writing not because I am opposed to government restraint with regard to wages and public finances, but because I am opposed to your government's disregard for the collective bargaining process. To impose legislation that removes the right to negotiate in good faith and discuss all aspects of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union contract with our employer is an affront to the process of collective bargaining.

As a teacher and guidance counsellor, I have spent 22 years encouraging my students be respectful and mindful of historic practices and laws that encourage open negotiation and respect for procedure. I have used government examples at all levels to demonstrate an understanding of political processes that support communication and are mindful of equity and transparency. My intention during these times is to educate students who are often discouraged by politicians and disengaged from the political process. My hope is that I instill hopefulness and trust in a system that they often find unfair.

I am asking that you not support Bill 148, knowing that it is your obligation to support the bill as a member of the Liberal caucus. As you vote, please think carefully about the students from rural Nova Scotia who surrounded you at Riverside Education Centre during our WE Day event last year. They are filled with questions about the process you follow to create legislation that affects their families and themselves. As an educator, I ask them to understand and respect this process and the MLAs who work within it.

As our MLA, I am asking that, as you cast your vote regarding Bill 148, you consider that its passing will undermine the collective bargaining process that union members have fought for and uphold as essential to our democratic rights.

Sincerely,

Lee Anne Arsenault
Guidance Counsellor
Riverside Education Centre
Milford, NS