

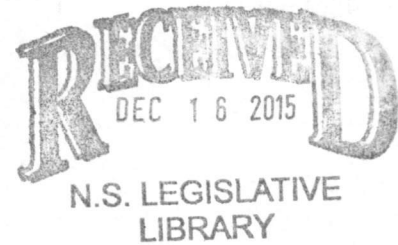
LAW AMENDMENTS COMMITTEE

Red Room, Province House

Tuesday, December 15, 2015

5:00 p.m.

Bill #148 - Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act



5:30 p.m.

1. Diane Frittenburg, Secretary-Treasurer
CUPE Nova Scotia
2. Jason MacLean, First Vice-President
Ian Johnson, Servicing Coordinator/Policy Analyst
NSGEU
3. Nancy MacCready-Williams, CEO
Doctors Nova Scotia
4. Joan Ling

6:30 p.m.

5. Shelley Morse, President
Nova Scotia Teachers Union
6. Kyle Buott, President
Halifax-Dartmouth and District Labour Council
7. David Etherington
8. Keri Butler

7:30 p.m.

9. Janet Hazelton, President
Nova Scotia Nurses' Union (NSNU)
10. Drew Moore
11. Danny Cavanagh, President
Nova Scotia Federation of Labour
12. Larry Haiven

(not able to appear;
brief distributed)

8:30 p.m.

13. Jonathan Grant
14. Wallace Fiander

DIDN'T APPEAR

...over

15. Shauna Boudreau

16. John Hutton
Dalhousie Student Union

9:30 p.m.

17. Mary-Dan Johnston

18. Ian Johnson

CARRIED

BE IT RESOLVED that this Committee conclude its consideration of Bill No. 148 no later than 4:50 PM on Wednesday, December 16, 2015, and, for further clarity, that, if at 5:00 PM on Wednesday, December 16, 2015, the Committee has not concluded its consideration of Bill No. 148, the question shall immediately be put to refer Bill No. 148 back to the House without further debate and without further amendment.

**PRESENTATION TO LAW AMENDMENTS COMMITTEE
NOVA SCOTIA LEGISLATURE**

“Bill 148 - An Act Respecting the Sustainability of Public Services”

By Dianne Frittenburg, Secretary-Treasurer, CUPE Nova Scotia
December 15, 2015

Good afternoon:

My name is Dianne Frittenburg and I am the Secretary-Treasurer of the Canadian Union of Public Employees Nova Scotia Division. The Canadian Union of Public Employees is Canada's largest union, with 634,000 public sector members working in almost every community across the country.

In Nova Scotia, we proudly represent more than 19,000 working women and men. Our members work on the front lines of our communities delivering public services to the people of Nova Scotia in home care support services, health care, community and social services, education, housing, libraries, municipalities, provincial highways, post-secondary education, early childhood education and care, and in other sectors of our economy.

I want to thank the members of the Law Amendments Committee for this opportunity to speak to this legislation.

The first point I want to make is that deep cuts will not sustain public services.

The compensation framework set out in this legislation of 0, 0, 1.0, 1.5 and 0.5 per cent are cuts to real wages. They will erase more than a decade of hard fought real wage gains.

The government says that it values the work of its public servants. But freezing the wages of public sector workers for two years and then legislating their compensation increases

does not show respect. This legislation is seriously impacting morale among public sector workers who are reminded again and again how little their employer respects the vital work they do. I am very disappointed that this government seems to see me and my fellow public servants as adversaries. I want to be a partner with our government to provide high quality services that Nova Scotians' need.

I would like to quote Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who stated in an Open Letter to Canada's Public Servants dated September 2015:

"I believe that in order to have a public service that is valued by Canadians, and a source of pride for its members, it must be valued by its government. That begins with – and necessitates – respecting the labour rights of public servants, and trusting in their ability to provide effective, independent, and professional services for Canadians."

Short-sighted labour changes – driven by ideology rather than evidence, and made without a legitimate consultative process – are both disruptive and unsustainable.

Nova Scotia's public service needs to recruit and retain the best and brightest of the next generation. That's how we secure a strong economic future - by investing in public services and public sector workers - not by cutting wages and trampling on public sector collective bargaining rights. No wonder young people are leaving our province and looking for a future elsewhere.

The economic challenges facing Nova Scotia are the need for more jobs and better wages. The provincial unemployment rate is high at 8.5 percent. Household debt ratios have risen to ever higher records. The government's own financial reports repeatedly say that slower wage growth has led to lower government revenues and then to a higher deficit. Those are the real economic problems the government needs to solve.

Nova Scotia's deficit is very low, especially with economy still recovering from the 2008 recession. Nova Scotia's debt to GDP ratio is relatively low. Much of that debt was

incurred to build public assets—the roads, the bridges, the hospitals, the schools, the community centres, the libraries, the government buildings and so much else -- of the province. If you subtract the real value of those public assets and the value of the crown land and other non-tangible assets, I suspect their value would exceed the amount of this financial debt.

Squeezing wages is bad for the economy. Top economists from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OCED) and even Standard and Poors are saying this. Freezing and cutting wages leads to a vicious downward cycle in the economy. Look at what has happened in New Brunswick where the previous Conservative government cut public spending and put the economy into recession. Unemployment rose dramatically, the province's revenues declined and its deficit increased instead of declining.

Is Nova Scotia going to be better off with fewer people working, earning less, and public services being reduced? A strong public sector with fair wages and benefits contributes to the strength of our province and economy.

Others here today will speak to the ways in which this legislation is likely unconstitutional. The Supreme Court has ruled that collective bargaining is a right. CUPE will continue to fight for the protection of democratic rights in our workplaces.

Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining is a reflection of human dignity. It guarantees the ability of workers, and employers, to join and act together to defend not only their economic interest but also civil liberties such as the right to life, security, integrity and personal and collective freedom. It guarantees protection against discrimination, interference and harassment. It is an integral part of democracy.

Research and analysis have demonstrated that respect for freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining also play an important part in sound economic development. It has a positive effect on economic development by ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared, and promoting productivity and industrial peace.

CUPE Nova Scotia believes that the government of Nova Scotia should be signalling that we have world-class public services, with world-class skills and world-class rights and conditions. That is the economy of the future. That is the message that will attract immigrants and investment and jobs.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conclusion, CUPE Nova Scotia Division urges the members of the Law Amendments Committee to reject this Bill.



cope491



Notes for a Submission

By

Jason MacLean
1st Vice President

Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union

To the
Law Amendments Committee
On
Bill 148 -
Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act

December 15, 2015

Introduction

Thank you, Madam Chairperson and members of the Committee for the opportunity to speak to you about Bill 148 – the *Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act*. I am Jason MacLean (First Vice-President of NSGEU). With me is Ian Johnson, who is the Servicing Coordinator/Policy Analyst with the Union.

The Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU) is the largest union in the province representing approximately 31,000 workers across the public sector in the provincial government, corrections, health care, public schools, community colleges, universities, municipalities, and community organizations.

We are here to speak out as strongly as we can against Bill 148, and to point out how fundamentally flawed and dishonest it is. This Bill adds to the continuing anti-labour legacy of the McNeil government, especially Bills 30, 37 and 1.

Workers' rights in general and collective bargaining in particular have been the prime target of this government from when it is assumed, despite its earlier commitments to us when seeking election and then, since coming to office. Under this government, collective bargaining has been on life support. With Bill 148, they have pulled the plug.

Disrespectful Process

We would firstly like to comment on the process leading to this Bill coming forward. We were not consulted about Bill 148, nor was the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour or other sister unions to the best of our knowledge. In fact, as recently as November 23, the Premier denied this legislation was being developed.

"Meanwhile on Friday, Premier Stephen McNeil denied contracts would be forced on anyone.... "Was I legislating a wage pattern? No, I wasn't." (CBC, Nov. 23, 2015)
(<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/nstu-province-threat-contract-imposed-1.3330343>)

Even during the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board's media conference a few hours before the Bill was introduced, the Minister also denied there was any special measure being planned to deal with "labour" costs.

There had been very little notice to all interested people and the whole legislative process is once again is being rushed as though this is a dirty deed that must be done and disposed of quickly.

Frankly, the McNeil government has shown itself to be dishonest in its dealings with public sector workers and their unions. Labour relations has been set back at least 50 years by this government, and it will take a long time to recover assuming this government takes no more offensive actions against the labour movement.

Disrespectful of Collective Bargaining

One of the purposes of Bill 148 is supposedly to “enable and encourage meaningful collective bargaining processes”. But even a cursory read shows the opposite, that is, how disrespectful it is of the collective bargaining process. In fact, the Minister admits that any bargaining would be limited to working conditions. This is not collective bargaining.

Collective bargaining is a process whereby two parties of equal footing: the employees represented by the union of their choice and the employer, negotiate all matters affecting the work of the employees. A specific pattern imposed on employees is not collective bargaining. A specific length of agreement is not collective bargaining, and a specific termination of a benefit such as the Public Service or Long Service Award is not collective bargaining. Limiting the scope of arbitration in terms of the amount of allowable wage increases where that is already in place is not collective bargaining.

In fact, the chances of any collective bargaining occurring once these three specific terms are imposed by this legislation or the threat of it, is next to negligible. This Bill effectively stops whatever collective bargaining was underway, and prevents that which had not yet been started, from even beginning at all.

Ineffective Fiscal Measure

The Minister introduced Bill 148 with minimal notice shortly after releasing the latest Budget Update. The deficit is now forecast to be \$241.2 million, which is an increase of \$118.6 million from the September forecast update, and \$143.6 million higher than the budget estimate. Yesterday's update showed that the two main reasons for this dismal development were reduced revenues of \$9.8 billion down \$135 million from budget day, and a prior year's adjustment reducing revenues by \$86.1 million. Departmental expenses are relatively constant and the growth in the level of employee compensation has declined by 1.2%.

However, instead of tackling the principal problem of reducing revenues head on, this government continues the well-worn path of attacking workers' rights to fair and decent compensation, at least in line with the expected growth in the cost of living. How will a two-year wage freeze and very limited wage increases of 1 and 1.5% in the third and fourth year help to grow the economy? If Nova Scotian workers have less money to spend, they will spend less here or they may even leave the province altogether. Where is the logic in this approach? It has not worked in over 20 years of wage freezes, rollbacks, downsizing or contracting out. What evidence is there that it will turn things around? This is an ineffective and inhumane fiscal strategy.

It shows the government is not willing to take the kinds of measures, which were recently outlined in the 2016 Nova Scotia Alternative Budget released on December 7. That budget aims to promote tax fairness and redistribute income through a more progressive income tax system and an enhanced income assistance program, while being fiscally responsible and maintaining the real value of wages and benefits of public sector workers.

Likely Unconstitutional Bill

We believe Bill 148 if passed and proclaimed will be found to be found to be unconstitutional by the courts. In recent decisions, the Supreme Court has ruled that collective bargaining is a right.

In our view, Bill 148 interferes substantially with freedom of association in several ways:

1. It prohibits employers and unions from agreeing to wage increases over the 0,0,1.5 and .5 % over four years,;
2. It takes away any future accruals of the long standing freely bargained monetary benefit of a retirement allowance and accrued sick leave in certain circumstances and prohibits agreement to continue it in this four years, and
3. For employees whose right to strike is prohibited, it limits binding arbitration of bargaining disputes.

We already have legal challenges going forward on Bills 30 and 37.
Do you really want to add this Bill to the list?

Conclusion

For all these reasons, the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union is strongly opposed to Bill 148, even if it is never proclaimed. It represents a significant interference in the collective bargaining process that is completely wrong-headed and inappropriate.

We strongly urge the Committee to urge that the government withdraw this Bill, and allow negotiations to take place without this unwarranted interference.

We appreciate this opportunity to speak with you, and we welcome your questions or comments.

Public Service Sustainability Act

Law Amendments

Speaker: Nancy MacCready-Williams

Doctors Nova Scotia

December 15, 2015

Thank you. As said in the introduction, I am here today as the CEO of Doctors Nova Scotia. Ideally, our President Dr. David Milne would be here. Dr. Milne is an anesthesiologist in Halifax. He, and more importantly his patients, were significantly impacted yesterday with the flood at the VG. As much as he would have wanted to be here today, and as important as this Bill and its implications are for Doctors Nova Scotia and the physician community, he is where he is needed most – with his patients, who always come first.

First let me say that I respect this government's commitment to take care of our province's fiscal state. I don't think anyone can argue that it is important to be accountable with our tax-payers' dollars and look out for our province's economic well-being.

I also want to acknowledge that through this Bill we can see government recognized the unique relationship it has with physicians – as independent contractors rather than employees – and therefore excluded them from the financial framework.

We believe, and think government agrees, that it is through negotiations where we can reach a compensation agreement that best serves Nova Scotia's tax payers, physicians and most importantly every Nova Scotian who accesses our health-care system. We are confident that we can reach a deal that brings much needed system change, and is sensitive to Nova Scotia's economic well-being.

Physicians however are not left untouched by this legislation. The legislation, if passed, removes access to arbitration if physicians and government are unable to come to an agreement through negotiations.

We cannot watch this important bargaining mechanism disappear without voicing our opposition.

Now let me clarify that Nova Scotia's physicians have never resorted to arbitration. We have always been able to come to mutual agreements with government. We have no reason to believe this would change in the foreseeable future. But in our view arbitration is an important tool in motivating both parties to look for solutions and compromises.

There are a few reasons why Doctors Nova Scotia is opposed to this Bill and the removal of recourse to arbitration if agreements cannot be negotiated at the table.

First – it is a diversion from our collaborative relationship with government

With this heavy-handed tactic, government creates an adversarial rather than collaborative working relationship with physicians. This Bill signals government has ultimate authority and is prepared to act in a unilateral and dictatorial manner.

This does not support true collaboration.

This is most disappointing, considering Doctors Nova Scotia and its collaborative relationship with government is often showcased across the country. We are cited as the province that solves problems together and searches for creative and progressive health-care delivery solutions.

We don't have to look far for examples of how this has served our province well.

Developing the province's physician resource plan and together making the difficult decisions that flows from that plan is one example.

Partnering on the shared pilot project where physicians and patients used personal health records is another more recent example.

Both have us leading the country in innovative system change, by working together.

It pains me to think of how many opportunities will be missed if we can no longer partner to move our health-care system forward in meaningful ways.

Secondly, arbitration is an essential tool to address the power imbalance

Physicians are first and foremost about their patients. They have sworn the Hippocratic oath. They have moral and ethical obligations to their patients. And by virtue of their very “calling” to the practice of medicine, they can not and would never turn their backs on patients. And aren’t we all fortunate that that is the case.

This means that the possibility of “job action” from physicians is a non-starter. But it is for that very reason that access to arbitration is essential. Without the ability to strike as a negotiations tactic, there must be a third party dispute resolution mechanism to address the imbalance in power that is otherwise in effect.

Government has the power to legislate, the power to spend, the power to tax, the power to audit.

What would be their motivation to negotiate mutually beneficial agreements without the risk of either arbitration or job action if an agreement cannot be reached at the negotiation table?

Access to arbitration instills a culture of willingness to negotiate, on both sides of the table.

The right to arbitration motivates both sides to find common ground and come to negotiated agreements.

My third reason for opposing this legislation is that it sends a negative message to physicians working in an already tenuous environment

This government introduced a massive structure change in April with the introduction of the Nova Scotia Health Authority.

As with any change of this size and nature there are significant growing pains. There are disconnects between administrators and care providers. Decisions are getting lost in the shuffle. Most importantly, there is lack of clarity on end goal. What is the new Health Authority's vision for health-care delivery in Nova Scotia? And how do physicians fit in that vision? No one seems to know.

Despite this, physicians are trudging through. They are shouldering the impact for the sake of their patients. They are setting aside their need for more clarity on what role they will be playing in the health-care system in six, 12 and 18 months and focusing on ensuring patients are not negatively impacted by the administrative disconnect.

And while they do this they are feeling disconnected and unappreciated by the larger system. This is not the time to further alienate physicians and signal that they are not valued partners in health-care delivery.

Lastly and quite simply – this legislation lacks leadership.

Taking away a rarely used, but important bargaining tool such as arbitration, is an unnecessary and heavy-handed tactic. It creates barriers not opportunities. It stifles creative and collaborative solutions.

Negotiated solutions are our priority

Despite our deep disappointment, we will continue to negotiate in good faith with government and work toward reaching a deal that brings new and important advancements to our health-care system.

You might wonder what kinds of advancements I am talking about... here are a few key examples:

- We need to change the way that primary care is delivered to Nova Scotians. We firmly believe that every Nova Scotian can and should have a family

physician, ideally working as part of a team that can provide care when and where it is needed most.

- We need to make better use of technology to provide better, more efficient and more convenient care to patients in Nova Scotia.
- We need to improve access to care in this province.
- And, in order to enable all of that and more, we need to ensure we are positioned to recruit and retain the talented physicians that Nova Scotians need and deserve.

I encourage government to continue to work with us to come to long-term solutions to these system challenges at the negotiations table.

Thank you for your time today. I am happy to take any questions you may have.

NSTU

The Chronicle Herald
Friday, May 31, 2013

A12
NEWS

An open letter to Nova Scotia Union Members:

The Nova Scotia Liberal Caucus Believes in Workers' Rights

The Nova Scotia Liberal Caucus would like to clarify misinformation being circulated by email to NSGEU members from union leaders.

This email indicates the Nova Scotia Liberal Caucus is against the right to strike – this is absolutely false.

The Nova Scotia Liberal Caucus believes in:

- The collective bargaining process
- The right to strike
- Protecting workers' rights, both unionized and non-unionized

I ask that you please share this information with your family, friends and colleagues.

Stephen McNeil

Stephen McNeil
Leader, Nova Scotia Liberal Caucus

NOVA SCOTIA
Liberal
CAUCUS
nsliberalcaucus.ca

Law Amendments Committee

Bill 148 – *Public Sector Sustainability (2015) Act*

Janet Hazelton, President, Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

December 15th, 2015

Good evening. The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union is a professional union representing approximately 7,000 Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners in Nova Scotia's hospitals, long term care facilities, adult residential centers, VON branches and Canadian Blood Services Centres. All of our members are affected by this Bill. On behalf of the NSNU, thank-you for the opportunity to speak to this legislation.

Systemic Bad Faith Bargaining

The *Public Sector Sustainability Act*, Bill 148, establishes a system of bad faith bargaining. We were told last week that bargaining is ongoing with the teachers. However, government has decided to establish bargaining under the specter of punitive legislation – don't step out of line, or collective bargaining will be cut short by a legislated agreement. It is bargaining under duress. We are asked to enter into free, collective bargaining while we know that it is not

free. We are free to negotiate, provided we accept what the government has set before us. It is bad faith bargaining from the outset. And even if we do bargain, we know that what we agree on collectively with employers now can be removed unilaterally by the government later. In short, this legislation undermines the integrity of the entire process.

Long Service Awards

The legislation threatens to remove negotiated long service awards. This benefit has been legitimately established through collective bargaining processes. To the casual observer it may seem like a gratuitous bonus at the end of one's career. The real story is that bargaining teams over the past 40 years have forgone wage increases or other benefits in order to attain long service awards. They are, simply put, a deferred salary designed to encourage retention and recruitment for a stable and loyal workforce. With their demise, we can expect nurses to take jobs in New Brunswick or many other provinces across the country where these freely negotiated benefits remain in place.

Independent Arbitrators

The ability to refer disputes to a neutral, independent, third party is a cornerstone of a modern liberal democracy. This legislation says that we cannot trust neutral and independent third parties and that government itself will be our arbitrator. To make an analogy with the legal system, this is akin to abolishing the judiciary and making the executive branch both judge and executioner. It concentrates power into the hands of one side of what is supposed to be a two-party contract. The relationship becomes less a respectful dialogue, and more a single party rule. It is this unfair and offensive treatment of workers that lead people to join unions in the first place. This bill is a huge step backwards for labour relations in this province.

Concentration of Power

There are specific elements of this *Act* that explicitly grants further power to a select few within the governing party, namely Cabinet and the Treasury and Policy Board. Cabinet is charged with prescribing the regulations under this *Act*, including designing and appointing members to the Public Services Sustainability Board, the body created to oversee the *Act*. Nova Scotia is already endowed with an independent Labour Board with panel members

appointed from both management and labour. To design a separate board is at best wasteful, and at worst, an underhanded move designed to further weaken the constitutionally protected right of workers to bargain for fair wages and working conditions. The establishment of this new mechanism creates a further divide between the private and public sector – a division that may prove detrimental to both our labour force and our economy.

On behalf of the Nurses' Union, I urge you to set this legislation aside. Allow free collective bargaining to run its course. We are not in a labour disruption; we are not at an impasse. The legislation is designed to address a problem that does not, and may never, exist. A poisonous cure is being proposed before there is even an illness to speak of. Allow nurses and other public sector workers to continue serving the public and to continue to make Nova Scotia a great place to live. Thank you.

Notes for a Submission

By

Ian Johnson

To the

Law Amendments Committee

On

Bill 148 -

Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act

December 15, 2015

Introduction

Thank you, Madam Chairperson and members of the Committee for the opportunity to speak to you about Bill 148 – the *Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act*. I am Ian Johnson who is almost retired after 20 years as a researcher/policy analyst with NSGEU and after another 20 years of public service at the municipal and provincial level.

Bills 52 (1994) and 148 (2015)

I think it somewhat ironic that I am here to speak with you today, when 21 years ago; I spoke to this Committee about Bill 52 which was the Public Sector Compensation (1994-97) Act. That Bill was quite similar to the current Bill 148. It reduced all public sector wages by 3% for employees earning more than \$25,000 a year, no merit/step increases during the period of May 1/94 to May 1/95, and all public sector collective agreements extended until Oct. 31/95.

Interestingly enough, there was a quote circulating at that time from the late Premier Savage from May 3, 1993:

“We need a government of partnership because government and the public service must work together on reform. We know that the solution is to reform is not cutbacks or downsizing. The new way of governing means supporting and better use of the individuals who serve the public.”

More recently, a similar quote from then Opposition Leader Stephen McNeil from September 2013 is as follows:

"Liberals support collective bargaining and will respect agreements. As well, we will also respect public services and, with civil servants, will see to it that Nova Scotians will not see reductions in direct service." (From Sept. 25/13 reply to NSGEU survey).

Both of these written commitments seem to mean little to the thousands of Nova Scotians affected by them and to the hundreds of thousands of Nova Scotians served by them. There is little or no collective bargaining permitted. Workers' rights are legislated away. I disagreed with Bill 52 and I now disagree with Bill 148.

Legal Challenges

Bill 52 was taken to the International Labour Organization and as I recall, the government was later found to be guilty of violating the covenants of the ILO. However, the Savage government simply disregarded this ruling.

Things are different now. We have recent Supreme Court rulings which clearly state that collective bargaining is a right. There is a legal challenge underway on Bills 30 and 37. If that challenge and another possible one on this Bill go forward, Bill 148 could be struck down leaving the government's plans in tatters.

The government could avoid this messy situation by withdrawing the Bill and allowing the parties to negotiate as they always have. This would certainly be my preferred course of action.

Impact on Public Services

I would suggest that for a Bill about public services, there is actually very little about public services or the staff who provide them. You might think that Bill 148 is truly about the sustainability of public services. It should contain provisions about the delivery of services and staffing levels. This might include assessing the need and effectiveness of public services, about determining the adequacy of services in specific departments and geographical areas, about determining the adequacy of current staffing levels, and about the need for additional training and education of staff.

Of particular concern in terms of staffing might be are there recruitment and retention plans for specific fields. What about succession planning? Should we be doing more to ensure that staffing of public services reflects the mix of equity seeking groups in a specific area? Surely, those concerns should be part of any serious consideration of sustainability of public services which might actually of greater importance than financial sustainability.

Having had parents recently living in nursing homes in Halifax, I am very concerned about the inadequacy of current staff to resident ratios, such as one RN or other staff to eight residents, when the ratio

should be more appropriately one RN or other staff to four residents. This is especially important for an increasing number and proportion of residents with dementia. My wife and I were frequently told by senior staff and front-line staff that it is increasingly difficult to recruit and retain staff. What is being done to address this crucial public service sustainability issue?

Conclusion

In other words, I am concerned that governments seem bound to repeat the mistakes of the past. In this case, is Bill 148 really much different or helpful than Bill 52 of 1994? I would suggest not. What consideration has been given to assessing its constitutionality in light of recent Supreme Court decisions?

I would suggest that the sustainability of public services is also much broader than the government's fiscal plan. It also has to do with needs assessment, adequacy of delivery, staffing levels, recruitment and retention, and reflecting the gender and cultural mix of local geographic communities and communities of interest. I am especially concerned about staffing ratios and recruitment and retention in nursing homes.

I think the Bill should be withdrawn until these important questions have been addressed. I welcome your questions and comments.

From: Stefanie Conway <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 7:48 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

I am not sure if I am wasting my time or not, sadly, when it comes to politics and our province, a lot of the time that I spend on politics feels like I am wasting my time. I want this letter read at the meeting. I want those who vote, To understand what they are voting against.

I am writing this letter as a mother and a teacher... but what may make my voice more heard, is if I say that I am writing this as your typical voter.

I am a mother of two children in our school system. I am a teacher not only as a profession. but a passion. I leave my 2 children in the morning, kiss them good bye, send them off to their school, and head to my other 29 grade five children, at my school.

I "teach" these children. I am their teacher, I am the woman that stands in front of them, and tries her best to foster a love of learning. I assess these children, even when I don't agree on some of these methods. I listen to them, I play referee for them. I feed some of them. I arrange Christmas gifts for some. I counsel some of their parents. I give them band-aids for their broken skin. I give them hugs for their broken hearts, I watch them succeed. I watch them fail. I watch them get excited. I watch them get bored. I see the pain in hurt in their eyes, of what may have happened on their way to school. I cry for these kids. I don't sleep many nights out of worry. I do not hang my hat up at 3:00 and be "done."

I am teaching a curriculum that is failing most of these children. There is absolutely no way for me to get to all children, everyday, to help them through their struggles. Children get left behind. Children get lost. Children lose.

I have so many special needs in my class, that even if I worked 24 hours a day. I would never get to half. I am failing these kids.. the government is failing me!

I spend more than time, love and commitment teaching my children. I spend money. I buy many things to teach them their science outcomes. I buy cooking ingredients to see that spark of learning for real life situations. I buy up to date books for my children to read. I buy sticky notes to have my children excited about reading. I buy snacks to feed ,many of my children who come wit nothing. I buy fun art supplies to engage even the "crankiest" of artist. I buy fun paper to convince those that "math is boring," changing things up aren't. I buy things to make our classroom more appealing, and inviting. I buy things for those children on I.P.P's because they are not properly funded... for help, time and supplies.

The government is failing my children. And in return, we are failing our future. It's as simple as that. The government does not put enough money in education. the government is making poor decisions when it comes to our future, So we as teachers, try to make up for that. We are the bodies in front on these classes, We are the ones that open our hearts, our life, our wallets. We get our appreciation from our parents, from the spark that we can see when the kids "get it." We are not appreciated by our government. To enforce this Bill, you are taking away our right to negotiate a fair salary increase. you are taking away our voice. The voice we are using to help mold our future,

Stefanie Conway
Grade Five teacher
Voter.

From: Caldwell, Karen <Karen.Caldwell@iwk.nshealth.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 8:11 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

Good Morning:

As an employee for the IWK, under the NSGEU Union, Local 423, I want my voice to be heard that I am against Bill 148.

We are already doing the work of two people in our jobs for less money and now you want to control our opportunity to earn a fair wage.

Thank you for listening.

Karen Caldwell
Administrative Assistant II
Clinical Nutrition Department
Phone: 902-470-7074
Fax: 902-470-3904
Karen.Caldwell@iwk.nshealth.ca

From: Strachan, Patricia H
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 8:55 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Legislation

Perhaps the premier should come and do my work and try to budget on my wage and see how he runs a home and feeds himself, shame on premier for his bully tactic's, shame on him for not recognizing how hard we work with shortages of staff, this government can pay how much to allow refugees into our country but cannot look after his own people, domestic bills go up and up and our wages remain the same, shame its time the premier took a wage cut, I am ashamed of this government.

Patricia H Strachan
Halifax Law Courts
1815 Upper Water Street
Halifax, NS B3J 1S7

Patricia.Strachan@courts.ns.ca

P 902-424-1854
F 902-424-0524

From: Colleen Rector <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 9:19 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Unfair labour legislation!!!

Unbelievable!! I have been in Human resources and labour relations during my 30 year career, on the Employer side, and one of the most precious cornerstones has always been the right to fair bargaining!! This piece of garbage legislation has destroyed all tenets of this valued method of negotiations. My Cole Harbour Member had better be a voice of reason on behalf of his constituents!! Please!

C J Rector, Mt. Edward Rd

Sent from my HTC

From: Laura MacMillan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 2:29 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Submission: Bill 148 Law Amendments Committee

Importance: High

Dear Honorable Members of the Law Amendments Committee,

It was with great disappointment that I read Bill 148. I have always prided myself as a Canadian and especially a Nova Scotian but this Bill and the last few introduced by the McNeil Government has made me question what has happened to the province my ancestors settled in and fought so hard to establish. I find myself wondering if I have been transported to an alternate universe where we no longer condemn countries like China for their violations of basic freedoms and rights but have instead embraced their policies as our own, bill by bill. Do we consider the consequences of our actions and the long terms effects of them or do we simply hope to make our finances look good so we can win the next election without a care to the ethics or violations that are necessary to do it? Where do we draw the line between a dictatorship and democracy? We preach at others countries about rights and freedoms yet our very own government has proven over and over that it does not honour or respect those same freedoms. Can we next expect Tiananmen Square when we protest all you have taken away from us? What further rights will we tolerate this Government violating?

I ask that members of the Committee vote down Bill 148 for all the Public Sector workers like myself who work hard every day just to bring in enough money to keep my household afloat. I am not rich, I am not rolling in the money, I am lucky with the rate the cost of living is rising to be able to pay my bills on time. I commute almost 3 hours a day to work in Halifax at my healthcare specialty in a job I love. I drive in snow storms and ice because it is an expectation that I will be there no matter what. There are no back ups or replacements if I don't come to work. I have ended up the ditch more than once because the roads were impossible to safely drive. Luckily I have yet to be one of the many serious accidents I drive past on the highway almost daily in the winter. Could I move to Halifax? No, not with what I make and still be able to provide a decent place to live in a good area for my two girls. My local hospital doesn't have positions in my specialty, in fact there is no one trained or qualified to even hire as a casual in this province. Bill 148 is asking me to accept not even the fair negotiation of my wages with not thought to how my family will suffer. The province will save money but who will save my family when I can't pay the heating bill or pay for my car to get back and forth to work?

So I ask again what message to do want to be known for, upholding rights and freedoms and fair treatment of workers or further blurring the lines between democracy and a dictatorship?

Thank you for your time and attention,
Laura MacMillan
Orthopaedic Technologist
And hopefully once more proud Nova Scotian.

From: Russell, Dale A
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 1:27 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Re: Bill 148

To: The Legislative Council Office,

I am sending this email in protest of Bill 148 for the following reasons:

As a public service employee it is quite disheartening to think that the government is choosing to not give the public sector a raise for the next 2 years, as a single mother this is very frustrating to think my light bill and phone bill, gas etc., is going to go up and I am going to have to maintain my lifestyle on the same wage for the next 2 years.

And to pass legislation without allowing our union to go to the table and negotiate a contract on behalf of the members is not only a kick in the teeth to the members it also takes any kind of negotiating power away from the union.

This legislation makes me feel like we live in a dictatorship here in Nova Scotia. I am proud of the fact that I am a Public Servant, I enjoy my job and feel that we should be given an annual raise as the cost of living increases annually.

Dale Russell

From: Holly Blinn <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 10:55 AM
To: karencasey@ns.aliantzinc.ca; office@delorey4antignish.ca;
stephenmcneil@ns.aliantzinc.ca; margaretmillermmla@bellaliant.net;
lenorezannmla@bellaliant.com; patdunnmla@bellaliant.com; Office of the Legislative
Counsel; billhornemla@gmail.com

Hi,

My name is Holly Blinn and I am a teacher in the CCRSB. I have been teaching for 5 years. I love teaching - it is my passion. Yet, I am saddened because I feel as though our democratic rights are being taken away. This is not fair. This is not right.

Holly

From: C Keleher <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 12:08 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Wage Freeze

How dare the government impose a four year wage pattern of 0%,0%,1%,1.5%, and 0.5% on thousands of members. These are Nova Scotia residents who, like yourselves, work hard to provide service to our province. This doesn't even cover inflation. I do not have kids and my husband and I have a hard time keeping up with power, oil and the rates of food going up.

For shame. To add insult to injury I see this:

Nova Scotia MLAs to get pension eligibility after 2 years.

Why wait two years, why not show up for one day, then claim it. I want to know how you can possible justify either one of the above actions because they are both equally ridiculous. Please advise.

Thank you,

Chris Keleher

From: Sly, Jana J
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 12:43 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: RE: Committee Hearing

Good Afternoon.

It is with regret that I cannot be there in person. I believe this to be an unfair approach to the whole bargaining process and totally destroys good faith.

I guess we can't count on the truth to be told regarding our bargaining process. Our Premier stated there wouldn't be legislation. There is the first "broken" good faith gesture.

I have been with government for a few years more than 15. It was one goal I had in school to obtain a government job because 1) there was a pension, 2) the wages were reasonable and 3) it had some job security.

I am not happy with the freeze. What if we would have been willing to go with the offer if they left our service award alone. I am more upset about that.

I recently discovered due to our pension being reduced at age 65 and our OAS not beginning till I am 67 the long service award was going to aid in this terrible gap in my income. It won't cover the whole drop, but it certainly would help. I planned around that when it came to what my retirement may be. Just to give you an indication, from age 65 to 67 I will lose approximately 20,000 in income (in just two years), unless our pension doesn't drop till we receive OAS. This is a devastating blow to my retirement.

How can you speak of valuing civil servants when you pretty much hold a gun to our heads and tell us we are going to accept the offer that was before us or it would be legislated on us.

I don't believe any of this is, fair to civil servants.

Sincerely disappointed,
Jana Sly

From: cindy hall <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 12:01 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

I am a single RN if the cost of living increases so should my paycheck. I live pay to pay now. I budget wisely. I will not be able to do so if Bill 148 gets passed. I am seriously considering moving to Edmonton where they treat their health workers with respect!

Sincerely Cynthia Hall RN

Sent from Samsung tablet

From: Joan M. Wood <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 11:07 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Cc: Joan M. Wood
Subject: Legislation Bill 148

Dear Law Amendments,

I have traveled all over the world from Nepal, China and Turkey teaching. I decided to make Nova Scotia my home as it is my home. I have been an educator since 1990 and have never seen a government so disrespectful to the democratic process of collective bargaining. It is an attack on teachers and educators. It is taking our rights away in a free and democratic society.

Joanie Wood teacher

From: Mills, Ron F
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 2:44 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

Some considerations:

Nova Scotia has a population of about 1 million (give or take). They do not all vote. Some are children, etc. There might be 750,000 potential voters. The 75,000 employees affected by this bill are ALL of voting age. I believe they represent about 10% - 12% of the common vote. Including their families, considering them all to be of "relationship" age, closer to a quarter of the vote.

Many who dislike government will applaud this move but a much higher percentage of those (apathetic) people don't vote than the employees affected.

Please forward this document for the meeting of December 15, 2015 Law Amendments Committee

Legc.office@nova.scotia.ca

Re: Law Amendments Committee for Bill 148

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sorry I couldn't attend December 15, 2015 Committee meeting.

I am a member of the NSGEU local 246 bargaining unit.

The proposed wage freeze is unfair and unconstitutional.

My net income is in the poverty range and is not keeping up with inflation. Expenses and costs are escalating while my salary is stagnating.

Food alone has and continues to escalate in price.

I work very hard in my position at the hospital and am proud of what I do. I contribute greatly towards the wellbeing of my patients. I only ask to get fair pay for work that I perform. With expenses and costs climbing, it is difficult to survive on a single income.

On another financial note, all departments at the hospital have already been affected by cutbacks imposed by the provincial government. Cutbacks in the range of 2% per department. Working conditions can suffer for staff thus affecting patients.

First financial cutbacks, now wage freeze is proposed to be legislated. Patient/staff safety and health get compromised.

Please reflect and consider the consequences.

I look forward to your response to my e-mail.

Regards

Joanne MacNeil

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

fax

[REDACTED]

ph.

Bill #148
Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act

CHANGES RECOMMENDED TO THE LAW AMENDMENTS COMMITTEE
BY THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND TREASURY BOARD

PAGE 9, Clause 21,

- (a) **line 1** - delete "person's" and substitute "public-sector employee's";
- (b) **line 2** - add ", other than a payment made in respect of absence by the public-sector employee from employment by reason of illness, injury or other absence authorized by any enactment, collective agreement, arbitral or other award or decision, agreement or arrangement of any kind," immediately after "leave";
- (c) **line 2** - delete "the" and substitute "a"; and
- (d) **line 2** - delete "any" and substitute "the".

PAGE 9, subclause 22(1),

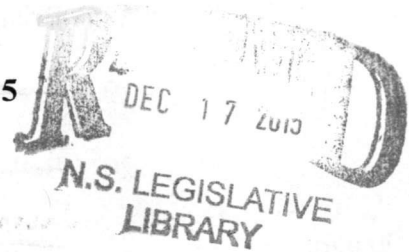
- (a) **lines 2 and 3** - delete "commencing employment on or after April 1, 2015,";
and
- (b) **line 4** - delete "the person's accrued sick leave" and substitute "a public-sector employee's accrued sick leave, other than a payment made in respect of absence by the public-sector employee from employment by reason of illness, injury or other absence authorized by the enactment, collective agreement, arbitral or other award or decision, agreement or arrangement of any kind, in connection with employment by a public-sector employer commencing on or after April 1, 2015".

PAGE 9, Clause 23, line 2 - add ", other than a payment made in respect of absence by the public-sector employee from employment by reason of illness, injury or other absence authorized by any enactment, collective agreement, arbitral or other award or decision, agreement or arrangement of any kind" immediately after "leave";

LAW AMENDMENTS COMMITTEE

Red Room, Province House

Wednesday, December 16, 2015



Bill #148 - Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 8:00 a.m. | 1. Jamie Cleveland |
| | 2. Michelle Tobin DIDN'T SHOW |
| | 3. Raymond Larkin |
| | 4. Chris DiLiberatore |
| 9:00 a.m. | 5. Rick Wiseman |
| | 6. Kevin Lacey |
| | 7. Dustin Rioux |
| | 8. David Ladouceur, Vice-President
<i>Unifor/MWF Local 1</i> |
| 10:00 a.m. | 9. Shirley Cullip Alexis Allen |
| | 10. Judy Haiven |
| | 11. Lana Payne, Area Director
<i>Unifor</i> |
| | 12. Bev Strachan |
| 11:00 a.m. | 13. Paul Hagen |
| | 14. Steve Joy, President
<i>CUPE Local 1867</i>
<i>Nova Scotia Highway Workers' Union</i> |
| | 15. Dean Tupper |
| | 16. Rachel Barbour |

12:00 noon

17. Brian Crawford

18. Brian Forbes

19. ~~Ben Sichel~~ David Barrett, Barrett Lumber Co.

20. ~~Bethany Hainsman~~ Nick Langley

1:00 p.m.

~~Jason~~
21. James Laverie

22. James Clancey

23. Damian Hall

24. Sebastian LaBelle

2:00 p.m.

25. Meg Ferguson

26. ~~Tammy Freeman~~

27. Katrin MacPhee

28. Trish MacDonald

3:00 p.m.

29. Therese Cordeau

30. Mike McNeil

31. Lori Root

32. Nan McFadgen

4:00 p.m.

33. Janet Hazelton, President
Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

Bill #148
Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act

**CHANGES RECOMMENDED TO THE LAW AMENDMENTS COMMITTEE
BY THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND TREASURY BOARD**

PAGE 9, Clause 21,

- (a) **line 1** - delete "person's" and substitute "public-sector employee's";
- (b) **line 2** - add ", other than a payment made in respect of absence by the public-sector employee from employment by reason of illness, injury or other absence authorized by any enactment, collective agreement, arbitral or other award or decision, agreement or arrangement of any kind," immediately after "leave";
- (c) **line 2** - delete "the" and substitute "a"; and
- (d) **line 2** - delete "any" and substitute "the".

PAGE 9, subclause 22(1),

- (a) **lines 2 and 3** - delete "commencing employment on or after April 1, 2015,";
and
- (b) **line 4** - delete "the person's accrued sick leave" and substitute "a public-sector employee's accrued sick leave, other than a payment made in respect of absence by the public-sector employee from employment by reason of illness, injury or other absence authorized by the enactment, collective agreement, arbitral or other award or decision, agreement or arrangement of any kind, in connection with employment by a public-sector employer commencing on or after April 1, 2015".

PAGE 9, Clause 23, line 2 - add ", other than a payment made in respect of absence by the public-sector employee from employment by reason of illness, injury or other absence authorized by any enactment, collective agreement, arbitral or other award or decision, agreement or arrangement of any kind" immediately after "leave";

You are cordially invited to
participate in our Bully-Free
Workplaces Program!

Nova Scotia Liberals clearly
are in need of this training,
as they continue to bully
public sector workers with
threats and legislation,
such as Bill 148, rather
than work with them in a
collaborative and respectful
way.

We are happy to provide
this training, free of charge.

Bully-Free Workplaces

Bullying is a psychological hazard in the workplace. It is unwanted and unreasonable behaviour that creates a risk to the health and safety of targeted workers, witnesses, and those alleged to engage in bullying behaviour.

Affordable education

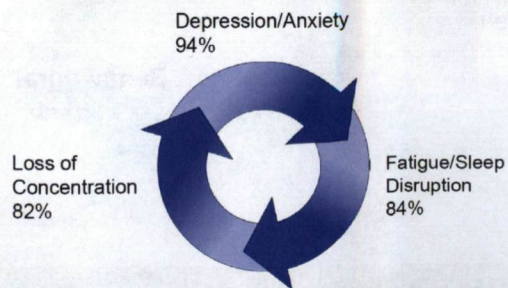
This facilitated program is offered to NSGEU members and NSGEU employers at no cost.

We offer the programs to any employer, union or non-union, on a cost-recovery basis. Contact the NSGEU for more information.

We have delivered the program to over 13,000 Nova Scotians who work in diverse organizations from just a few employees to those which are province wide.

We also deliver the program in other Atlantic Provinces and have trained trainers to continue its delivery.

Impact of Bullying on Mental Health



A Proud NSGEU Program

The NSGEU Board of Directors has been proud to support the Bully-Free Workplaces Program since 2010.

A full-time Bully-Free Workplaces Coordinator, Susan Coldwell, oversees the development, maintenance, and implementation of the program and ensures its highest standards.

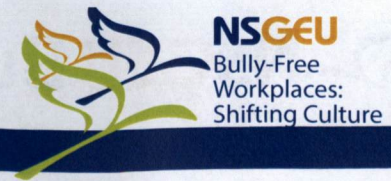
The NSGEU has been recognized internationally and nationally for its leadership role in developing and implementing facilitated programs to address bullying and psychological health in the workplace.

National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace

Our program aligns with the main objectives of this voluntary standard introduced by the federal government in 2013:

- To prevent psychological harm in the workplace and;
- To promote psychological well-being in the workplace.

Mission: *To be a leader in advancing the right to dignity on the job through delivery of programs to promote Bully-Free Workplaces and Restorative Workplace Practices.*



Dustin
Rioux

Bully-Free Workplaces: Shifting Culture



Contact NSGEU for more
information about our Bully-Free
Workplaces programs
902-424-4063, 1-877-556-7438
or email inquiry@nsgeu.ca
nsgeu.ca

NSGEU

Nova Scotia Government & General Employees Union

NSGEU

Nova Scotia Government & General Employees Union

NSGEU

Nova Scotia Government & General Employees Union



NSGEU Bully-Free Workplaces: Shifting Culture

Our Programs:

Bully-Free Workplaces Program:

Two-hour awareness session: This session defines bullying and explores physical and psychological health effects of bullying on individuals, including witnesses and bystanders. It also provides an introduction to solutions for employers.

Four, two-hour modules: Provides an introduction to the problem of workplace bullying in module format where it is operationally challenging for an employer to commit the time for a full-day session. The module format spread over several weeks allows for time to practice skills and to implement changes to shift workplace culture.

Six-hour interactive workshop: Explores workplace bullying in greater depth and includes small group activities that engages participants in understanding and implementing solutions. It may be delivered in two half-day sessions.

Leadership training: This component has been developed specifically for managers/supervisors, and leaders in human resources and occupational health & safety. It addresses workplace policies, investigations, re-integration, and application of the National Standard for Canada on Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace.

Restorative Practices in the Workplace:

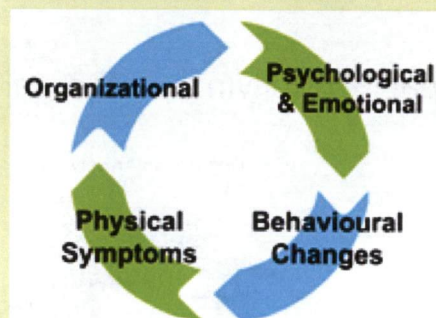
Provides an alternative approach to traditional ways of dealing with workplace bullying. It asks who has been harmed, why the harm occurred, and how to repair the harm using principles of respect, responsibility, and reintegration. Our two-hour awareness session is a pre-requisite.

EMPATHIC (EMpowering Positive Action To Heal and Integrate Change) Program:

This program is for those directly impacted by bullying behaviour - either as someone who has engaged in bullying behaviour or as someone who has been bullied. It is delivered individually in two-hour sessions and can be delivered in three to eight sessions. This program offers coaching and skills building as well as provides opportunities for self-reflection.

"Employers should be recognized for getting on board with the union to address and educate staff on bullying. We need to create a positive, safe, bully-free workplace." ~ NSGEU member

Effects of Workplace Bullying



Contact NSGEU for more
information about our Bully-Free
Workplaces programs
902-424-4063, 1-877-556-7438
or email inquiry@nsgeu.ca
nsgeu.ca

NSGEU

"One cannot change their bullying behaviour if they are not aware they are being a bully. On the other hand those being bullied need to know their options and resources." ~ Participant

Presentation to Law Amendments Committee

Brian Forbes, Former President, NSTU

There are several objections I would like to raise to the Public Services Sustainability Act that is under consideration here today.

- 1) ***The legislation is wrong in principle.*** Collective bargaining is widely recognized as a human right by many international organizations. It has also been affirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada as a right protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. For example in 2007 the Court stated: "Recognizing that workers have the right to bargain collectively as part of their freedom to associate reaffirms the values of dignity, personal autonomy, equality and democracy that are inherent in the charter." While claims to the contrary have been made, this bill does not respect the right of public employees to collective bargaining. In fact it completely ignores and abrogates that right. One does not have to be a lawyer, a legislator, a member of an opposition party, a union member, or even very intelligent or honest to see that this is so.
- 2) ***The legislation is wrong legally.*** The collective bargaining process for teachers is prescribed under the aptly named *Teachers Collective Bargaining Act*. The Act allows for normal bargaining, conciliation, mediation, and arbitration as ways of reaching an agreement between the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and the Province. It does not make provision for interference by the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia whenever the government of the day does not appreciate the position taken by the NSTU. In introducing this bill the government is setting aside a completely valid and proven process, already established in the body of law of this province, and substituting an *ad hoc* settlement reached by an *ad hoc* process. The procedures envisioned under the TCBA have been totally ignored and evaded since the beginning of negotiations between the NSTU and the Province.
- 3) ***The legislation is wrong politically.*** The health of the body politic depends on mutual respect and trust between government and citizens, and between government and its employees. This legislation tends to the destruction of both. Again the issue is the lack of respect for the normal and proper means of establishing contracts between the province and its 75 000 public servants (who are also citizens, as it happens). There is also the lesser but important consideration, for the government which has introduced this bill, that similar actions have been perpetrated by previous governments in the past, and have usually resulted in subsequent electoral defeat of that government, as well as – on occasion – damage to the ability of that government to govern effectively in some respects during the remainder of its mandate.
- 4) ***The legislation is wrong morally.*** Clearly the bargaining strategy of this government from the beginning of negotiations between itself and the NSTU has been to threaten and intimidate the Union, indicating surreptitiously at first, openly of late, that if the government's position is not "accepted" by the Union punitive measures by the Legislature will follow. This bill is obviously a continuation of that reprehensible strategy, designed primarily to place external pressure on the Union to accept contract provisions which its members have already rejected. If bullying is immoral then this bill is immoral. If extortion is morally wrong then this bill is morally wrong. If intimidation is socially unacceptable as a means of having one's way then this bill is socially unacceptable.
- 5) ***Finally there is one aspect of the legislation which it seems to me is wrong conceptually.*** That is the provision that in future arbitrators must take into account the ability of the province to pay. The question that arises in my mind is how an arbitrator would reach any conclusion as to the ability of a particular government to afford a particular settlement. Would s/he be forced to rely on government's own estimate of its ability to pay? Surely that would render the role of arbitrator superfluous. However I cannot see what other means would be available to an arbitrator to make such a determination.

Since this is a flawed piece of legislation – flawed in principle, legally, politically, morally and conceptually - my suggestion is that it be given the only consideration it deserves, that is that it be consigned to the dustbin of history.

Bill 148 – CFIB remarks

Hello Mr. Chair and MLAs. Thank you for the opportunity to address the Law Amendments committee on Bill 148, the Public Service Sustainability Act. CFIB supports the Bill and the government's actions to curb the rate of public servants compensation.

The Ivany Report stated, *"... our economy today is barely able to support our current standards of living and public services, and will be much less going forward unless we can reverse current trends."* A new approach is needed and it has to be both labour and government working together to see what is affordable to taxpayers and what is fair to employees.

CFIB has been talking about the issue of public sector compensation for some time. In fact, CFIB released our annual **Wage Watch** report in last March which showed Nova Scotia's provincial public sector makes 26% more than the same comparable occupations in the private sector. That is a significant differential given our province has a \$241 million deficit, aging infrastructure, and a tax environment that does not foster small business growth and development. Quite the opposite, we see outmigration of people in much of our province, exception of HRM, because of the lack of economic opportunity. The creation of economic opportunities begins with a competitive tax and regulatory system.

The problem is it makes it tougher to reduce the tax burden when your deficit is as high as Nova Scotia's current deficit of \$241 million. CFIB has advocated for government to reduce spending and to focus on core services. One significant manner of reducing our expenditures is to look at public sector compensation. When 52% of a \$10 billion budget is devoted to employee compensation, it would make sense to review the largest expenditure.

Let's be clear this is not a roll back or freeze. It is 3% over four years. Many small business owners do not receive increases in salary and sometimes many small business owners go long periods of time without receiving a salary to merely cover their costs. This is reality of small business in Nova Scotia.

Let us not forget the provincial civil service receives a defined benefits pension plan and is able to keep banked sick days. Most organizations have moved away from defined benefits pension plans following the recession of 2008-2009 because of the significant liability they can carry. The issue of sick days is another issue. When public servants bank sick days to use towards early retirement, it means we are effectively paying for two people to cover one job. I would suggest that this is not the intent of sick days and that it costs our province significant money. I know the government officials made that very clear in their technical briefing that this was not an option to be reviewed, but in an era of austerity it would be a prudent decision.

CFIB is pleased that the provincial government is listening to the recommendations from the Ivany Report and creating change in how we do business in our province. The world has changed and the way government delivers services is starting to change as well, why shouldn't our approach to labour negotiations change? Public service compensation needs to be affordable, stable, and fair for all Nova Scotians, not just the public servants who are the beneficiaries of pay raises and benefits. CFIB has told the government that small businesses are struggling to stay afloat under high taxes and an uncertain economy, we are hopeful this approach means the government is serious about expenditure management and reducing the tax burden.

**PRESENTATION TO LAW AMENDMENTS COMMITTEE
NOVA SCOTIA LEGISLATURE**

“Bill 148 - An Act Respecting the Sustainability of Public Services”

By President of CUPE Nova Scotia – Mike McNeil
December 16, 2015

My name is Mike McNeil. I am a long-time executive member of CUPE Local 1259, Long Term Care, and the president of CUPE Nova Scotia.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak to this legislation.

What is the purpose of Bill 148?

The Finance Minister says that Bill 148 is about sustaining public services.

If public services are valuable enough that the government thought it needed to legislate essential service agreements on almost 40,000 health care and community services workers in seven (7) different unions last year, the services are valuable enough to pay a fair, negotiated wage.

Every day in Nova Scotia, public sector workers are being asked to do more with less. And so far we have kept doing that. CUPE members do it because they care about the frail elderly woman in a nursing home bed, they care about the well-being of our children in the classroom, their safety on the school bus, and CUPE members work to deliver the best services possible to vulnerable adults with disabilities. These are just a few of the many public services CUPE members provide. It is devastating to workplace morale to have government raise the fist of legislation over the collective bargaining process.

The Premier says Nova Scotia can't afford unions anymore.

Do you really think that cutting the wages of a nursing home worker is going to save the economy? My rate of pay is about \$16.50 an hour. Over the term of the

government's compensation plan in Bill 148, I calculate that this will give me around about a dime more an hour - 45 cents more an hour after four (4) years.

It's not the fault of the average worker that the economy is in trouble. In fact the opposite is true. Raising wages will boost consumer spending and assist in relieving the indebtedness of Nova Scotians. Unions' wages raise the standard of living for everyone and build the middleclass. Weakening unions and workers' rights will only hurt the economy.

Wage freezes will cause a brain drain in the public sector. It is already difficult to fill positions in the public sector. A freeze will make the situation worse.

Public sector workers are paying for the fiscal mismanagement of the Liberal government. The McNeil government is playing games, trying to blame public sector workers for their broken promise to not cut services.

Stephen McNeil promised better – nowhere in his election platform did he indicate a plan to freeze wages or sidestep collective bargaining. In fact, McNeil took out an ad during the election proclaiming that he respected collective bargaining and the right to strike. So much for truth in advertising. McNeil is not the 'progressive' he promised to be. This government's word cannot be trusted.

Undermining workers' rights, and attacking the gains we have made are not the way to build a stronger economy in Nova Scotia. Nor is it the way we build strong communities. Many of our public sector workers are single parents working two (2) or more jobs to make ends meet. Imagine the burden on them.

The contracts we negotiate at the bargaining table set standards that improve both union and non-union workplaces and help all families keep up. We need to protect more vulnerable workers with our workforce changing so much and so quickly. Young workers, new Canadians, workers who are part-time or in temporary positions all need unions to work on their behalf.

Unions like CUPE are pushing for an expanded CPP, affordable quality child care, a health care system that will be there for us in the future, pay equity and other programs that help all Nova Scotians achieve a good quality of life.

Everyone has the right to join a union and to engage in a meaningful process of collective bargaining.

When collective bargaining is free of political meddling, it works.

Collective agreements in Nova Scotia are on par with collective agreements negotiated by public sector unions and employers in Atlantic Canada and Canada at large. There is no evidence of lopsided bargaining here.

The process of collective bargaining has evolved over many years and has been long-supported in jurisprudence and by Canada's international obligations. We understand that collective bargaining may at times appear slow and complicated but this is the case for many other processes in a democratic society that respects fundamental human rights.

Free collective bargaining is a human right.

Bill 148 tramples on those rights.

CUPE does not engage in concession bargaining. We are not turning the clock back on wages or workers' rights. CUPE remains committed to a meaningful collective bargaining process and is ready to engage in that process with government and employers at any time.

Thank you for your attention.

cope491

CUPE / *Canadian Union
of Public Employees*

Law Amendments Committee Re: Bill 148

My name is Kim Manthorne, I work for Community Services Child Protection as a Family Support Worker. That means I work directly with parents and families who need to address child protection concerns. I have worked for the provincial gov't for over 20 years and I'm proud of that and the work I do. I am also proud to be an NSGEU member and I am sitting on the larger bargaining committee this round.

Here is one government employee and one affected families perspective on what has transpired thus far.

You and my union came to an agreement however I'm not sure there was a whole lot of negotiating. I think a take or leave it came pretty quick and we were told it was a final offer. This agreement dictates how my family will live in the next four years. I wasn't exactly thrilled with having to cut spending because lets face it ... a wage freeze is a roll back as everyday living expenses don't get frozen, they continue to rise. I may have to look at my daycare expenses for an example. I currently have both of my children enrolled in an excellent small business before and after school care arrangement. There are cheaper options but less quality care for my children. Maybe I won't make that particular sacrifice but these are the thoughts running through my head and I'm sure they are going through the minds of all civil service employees who are hardworking tax payers.

But my union, with a heavy heart recommended acceptance of this agreement. We had just decided this very difficult decision knowing myself and my fellow coworkers deserve better, their families deserve better when out of nowhere we were told the whole membership needed to make the decision very quickly. I felt like this government was taking away my dignity to not only accept a harsh agreement but to force the membership to make an uninformed decision.

You backed off that and agreed we needed to consult with the membership. I almost said thankfully but I am not thanking anyone for almost forcing my coworkers and I to come to hasty decision where most people did not know what was at stake; so we were able to breathe and to start the process of educating the membership.

So now we have bill 148 - the illegal wage restraint act. I feel like I was lied to, my coworkers were lied to, the whole civil service was lied to and every resident of Nova Scotia was lied to. This government had this legislation ready to go. In my opinion you are using it to keep workers under your thumb and now we once again have to make a decision - we will inform our members. But now we are making the decision with our heads in a guillotine and my children standing behind me as the decisions we are making today are going to affect their rights in the future.

My name is Kim Manthorne... a less proud Provincial government employee.

From: bianca ridler <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 11:58 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148 comments for consideration

Dear Committee,

I am not a greedy person. We live modestly and that's fine - I make a decent living as a teacher and my family is comfortable. The government's proposed wage freeze and subsequent incremental increase was okay with me. I thought it was fair, and I still think it is fair, but it is not for you to impose from on high.

I will fight your attempt to bring our union to its knees. Never have I felt so belittled, and that makes me angry. I'm insulted by this government's tactics to weaken the unions, who's job it is to balance workers' financial security and working conditions with the employer's financial (and in this case political) agenda.

My job is rewarding in ways you (given your recent actions) could not possibly comprehend. It is rewarding because I work every day to help students understand and respect one another. I teach them respect by showing it to them first, through dialogue, and by emphasizing LISTENING over talking. I don't think it's unreasonable for our unions to expect the same courtesy. I ask you to please shelve Bill 148, and start listening.

Sincerely,

Bianca Ridler

From: Jennifer Gravel <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 11:03 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Submission to Law Amendment Committee

December 15, 2015

Chair, Law Amendments Committee

Please accept this letter as a submission to the Law Amendments Committee currently hearing from the public on Bill 148, The Public Service Sustainability Act.

My opinion is that this piece of legislation should be withdrawn from the NS Legislature as it is yet another example of a government using legislation to force its way rather than having open dialogue and debate about the economic future of Nova Scotia. The Liberal majority uses media sound bites and cherry picking of information to sell this legislation as necessary to "balance the books" and keep the business of the province moving along, but remains silent on the way it has overspent in other ways.

This legislation is not needed. What is needed is a trust in the over 10,000 Nova Scotians, and their families, impacted by this law, to bargain in good faith for contracts that respect all of us as both taxpayers and users of the many services provided by government. We all pay taxes and some of us earn our living by providing the services provided by tax dollars. We are not separate groups as the Liberal party would like people to think.

The Bill is presented as a way to ensure the future of the public service, but by using the law to negate collective bargaining rights, it undermines the integrity of the whole system. If wages can be legislated why should public servants trust that any other conditions of work cannot be legislated rather than negotiated? Teachers are already voicing this concern.

Knowing that voicing opposition to this Bill will not change its passing, I would ask that it be amended to reflect the offer that was given to the Public Service, especially in regard to the long service award. It is hard enough to know that it will no longer accrue, but it should be paid at the rate of pay someone is earning when they retire and not at the rate of pay as of April 1, 2015. Limiting the income and earning potential of Nova Scotians who work for the government is hard enough while they are working, but reducing funds available at retirement and after, makes life more difficult for many.

Thank you for reading this and noting my concerns with Bill 148.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Gravel

Wolfville, NS

December 15, 2015

Dear Law Amendments Committee:

I find it sad and ironic that on a day this Committee sits before passing Bill 148: The Public Service Sustainability Act, Vladimir Putin signs a law allowing Russia to ignore international human rights rulings. Undoubtedly, Russia will be condemned for passing this law, perhaps by some sitting on this committee. As you read and listen to people speak about Bill 148, I hope that you will think about what is happening in Russia, and how Bill 148 sets the province down the same path.

Collective bargaining is defined as “a method of jointly determining working conditions between one or more employers on one side and organized employees on the other. The normal outcome is a collective agreement outlining terms and conditions of employment as well as issues such as union recognition, grievance procedure and special committees”.¹ Previously, all provincial governments and the federal government agreed that it is in the public interest to permit and encourage collective bargaining. It is common practice that in situations where a group such as the public service does not have the right to strike, binding arbitration by a tribunal settles disputes when a mutual agreement cannot be reached. These fundamental principles of collective bargaining are imperiled by Bill 148.

Further, Bill 148 is in violation of Civil Service Master Agreement and perhaps the court of law. Anyone who votes in favour of Bill 148 will not only be encouraging the breaking of collective bargaining rights, but will also be on the wrong side of history. I ask each committee member to reflect how you will be viewed by leaders and citizens in Nova Scotia as well as other provinces and international communities. What message is being sent if Nova Scotia does not uphold rights, does not bargain in good faith, and does not uphold agreed upon and signed collective agreements?

As a public servant, I am concerned about the future of the public service in Nova Scotia. On one hand, we are told we are valued for the work we do. On the other hand, the rhetoric is that we are overpaid, redundant, and that the government can no longer afford benefit packages such as the Long Service Award. There is a need to make cuts to the public service and services need to be privatized to manage the deficit. In this note, I would like to take an opportunity to share my experiences and offer some advice based on these experiences.

¹ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/collective-bargaining/>

The Honourable Stephen McNeil has recently been quoted as saying the province cannot afford to leave wage and benefit decisions to a third party arbitrator. May I remind you that your MLA wages and benefits were reviewed and set by a third party committee which compared your wages and benefits to elected officials in other provinces. If this process was fair for you, why is legislation needed to place limits on arbitrators in determining wages and benefits for public servants? It seems rather hypocritical.

James Sawler, an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at Mount Saint Vincent University, wrote an opinion piece in The Chronicle Herald, which was published on March 20, 2015. In that opinion, Dr. Sawler argued that austerity has not worked elsewhere and that a vibrant public service is needed in Nova Scotia. From my experiences and as someone who has specialized in community economic development and rural sociology, I concur.

There is no doubt that Nova Scotia has challenges going forward. The recent budget update clearly indicates that problems reside on the revenue side and not on the spending side. Revenues are down, but departmental spending has been controlled. Still, Nova Scotia's GDP to debt ratio has been falling in recent years, and our ratio is comparable to the national average and much lower than that of Ontario and Quebec. The Conference Board of Canada estimates that the Nova Scotia economy will grow by 2.3% in 2016. Looking at the numbers objectively, the present and future do not look as bleak as the budget suggests.

For the past six years, I have been fortunate to work with intelligent, knowledgeable, and dedicated colleagues who believe in the Public Service Values. My fear is that actions such as contracting out services, reducing benefits, and wage restraints will result in the public service losing highly skilled, experienced workers. The reality is that there may not be an incentive to stay in the province as the economic disincentives will outweigh the perceived quality of life benefits. Losing these public servants is especially troubling considering that innovation is paramount in moving the province forward. The public service needs people with experience and diversified skill-sets, especially considering the public service will experience staff turnover from a wave of retirements, only made worse if this Bill becomes law. Current demographics show that a wave of retirements will occur in the near future leaving a dearth of experience in the public sector. Further, downsizing the public service will have an effect on supporting the pensions promised to retirees and affect the services the public expects and receives. What this Bill does not consider is that many of my colleagues and I have options. I chose to make Halifax and Nova Scotia my home, and I am writing this letter because I, like many of my colleagues, want to live here and play a role in helping Nova Scotia reach its potential.

Eliminating benefits such as the Long Service Award will have a disastrous impact on the morale of public servants. If you do not believe me, check the most recent results of the How is Work Going Survey. While I have not seen the most recent results, it is likely that they are even worse than the previous results as the Public Service Commission has not even released them. The Long Service Award is the only retention mechanism in place for unionized public servants. A decision to eliminate the Award will impact new and recent hires disproportionately. Recent and

new hires will have the most to lose, while public servants near retirement will be relatively unaffected.

If the Long Service Award is frozen, I will have accumulated six weeks of payment upon retirement. In reality, this sum is not much. Without an opportunity to earn bonuses or increase my income aside from increases that are collectively bargained, there is no longer an economic incentive to work for the public service with the exception of receiving a pension upon retirement. Considering that most other provinces have lower taxes, higher salaries, and a lower cost of living aside from housing, there really is not much of an economic incentive to remain in Nova Scotia. Many younger and middle-aged Nova Scotians have already figured this out and moved to other provinces.

In sum, I urge you to contemplate the latent effects of Bill 148 as the province currently has difficulty attracting and retaining young and middle-aged workers with skill-sets that will be needed to deal with the challenges facing the province. Public servants want to be actively engaged. My hope is that you will allow us to be partners on the journey to making our province a better place to work and live.

I would welcome an opportunity to discuss any of these issues further should you desire.

Sincerely,

Dr. Andrew Knight

Dartmouth, NS

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 9:53 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

Dear Chair of the Law Amendments Committee,

I am writing to ask you to consider stoping Bill 148 or at least to remove certain items.

With collective bargaining we teachers get to negotiate with the government things we feel are essential to teaching students. This bill removes this option with the "hope" that the government will continue to work with us on important issues. Without these issues resolved and agreeded upon inside a negotiated contract what is to ensure that the government will actually work with teachers? Unfortunately, sometimes it seems that teachers are the last people consulted on how to improve the situation inside the classroom.

I would also ask that you please remove the provision in the bill regarding "service awards" for teachers. It seems that the current government has forgotten that these service awards were negotiated with the teachers union over many, many years in LIEU of salary increases. We agreed to lower salaries in the short, medium, and long term in exchange for a service award upon retirement. Many teachers have factored this arrangement into their financial planning and to take them away now will significantly impact them upon retirement. It's one thing to tell new teachers moving forward that they will not get an award and to plan accordingly, and quite another to tell teachers who have been planning on receiving a certain award at retirement that they are now "out of luck". Teachers with 15-25 years experience cannot go back in time to re-do their retirement planning. This is a horrible injustice to teachers who, for many years, have said they did not need extravagant raises (unlike MLA's), and instead would wait for their service awards.

I don't have a problem with wage freezes, and petty 1% increases if they are the norm across the public sector but for goodness sakes, please don't take away what teachers have already negotiated in good faith with previous governments. That is simply not fair..

Thank you very much,

David Burt

From: Yasemin U <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 9:49 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Opposition to Bill 148

Dear Chair of the Law Amendments Committee:

My name is Yasemin Ugursal and I am a teacher writing to oppose Bill 148.

Teaching has become an incredibly difficult job and the government's Bill 148 is going to worsen these conditions. Not only has the government stripped us of our constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, but this bill also impedes our ability to advocate for funding that would improve our students learning environments which are our working conditions.

Class room sizes, diverse classroom composition (i.e. Students who read at grade one level and students who read at a grade 12 level in the same classroom; some who have severe mental health conditions; some who speak no English at all; some who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and so much more), lack of human and physical resources (not enough Resource or EAL teachers, not enough books for the class and so on), little to no consultation with active teachers on curriculum or assessment (ex. implementing provincial assessments that cost so much money and yet have no impact on learning), increasing demands for duplicate reporting and other types of redundant virtual paperwork, an expectation that teachers are on-call 24/7 via email, and never-ending and ever-changing direction on procedures and policies and protocols.

I urge all Liberals to have the courage to vote against Bill 148; to show Nova Scotia's youth who will build up our economy if we allow them an opportunity, that you support them and their educators. I expect all members of the Conservative and NDP parties to vote against Bill 148 because it is wrong and it violates workers' rights.

The only way for this province to develop to its full potential is for our government to invest in its future; its people. Build people first and everything else will follow.

With hope and respect,

Yasemin Ugursal

From: Jenny Trites <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 9:00 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Statement About Bill 148

To the Members of the Law Amendments Committee,

My name is Jennifer Trites and I am an Elementary Music Teacher. I have been working for the Halifax Regional School Board since September 2010. I am writing to you to tell you that I consider bill #148 to be an unjust and short-sighted piece of legislation.

Going into this profession I had no illusions about how hard I would need to work; I have chosen a career that is challenging, exciting, and calls for creativity and energy even moment of the day. I can see myself doing this joyfully for the next 30 years.

I am unable to appear before the committee in person since this is Holiday Concert season across the province, and you will not find any teacher busier than a music teacher. Even though these concerts are not technically part of my contract, I love concerts. I love the opportunity to connect with the community, and for the students to really show what they can do.

I am a young teacher (in my first five years of teaching for HRSB), and I keep hearing from your government that young teachers shouldn't mind this contract, as we will still move up the pay scale. But as a young teacher, I will be hurt the most by the changes to the service award.

Teaching is becoming more demanding. We are on the front lines for all of society's struggles: poverty, food security, and mental health to name a few. As I navigate these emerging challenges, is my work less valuable than that of teachers who retired last year? How is this fair to my generation of hard working teachers? What message are you sending to the young people of this province?

As a teacher, I want the best for my students. I am happiest when they are happy and learning, and I go about my day trying to make their short experience in my music classroom an uplifting and energizing one. I want the right to advocate for my students when I see a decision that is having a negative impact on their learning or on their well-being. Class size, class composition, the amount of EPA support given to students with exceptional academic or behavioural needs—all of these things impact children all across the province.

Every day, and on many evenings and weekends, teachers work diligently to provide the best learning opportunities for my students. We arrive at school early to serve students breakfast if they are hungry. We purchase supplies from our own resources for students who could not afford them. We organize extra-curricular activities (in my case, choir and ukulele club) and take groups to special performances in the community outside of school hours. We seek out professional development opportunities on my own time and funded by our own resources not for an upgrade in license, but because we think they will improve our skills as educators.

Bill #148 is fundamentally dishonest. The government claims that they will negotiate, and then call on this legislation if the so-called negotiations don't go their way. This is not what negotiation looks like. This is an attempt to *bully*, to *silence*, and to *dismiss* teacher concerns about the very real challenges we face in our workplace on a daily basis. Challenges to our teaching, which equals challenges to our student's learning. We cannot pretend that there is a disconnect between the two.

Canadian workers have the right to unionize, and unions have the right to collective bargaining in good faith. Using the threat of legislation to avoid this process will impede any hope of cooperation for the benefit of our children and our province. I am a teacher, but I am also a voter and a taxpayer. I care about the financial health of my province, and driving a wedge between teachers and the government will only damage the province I care for.

The attempt by the Nova Scotia Provincial government to silence the voice of those who care deeply for the future of Nova Scotians is unfair and incredibly short sighted. I ask you rethink and reject bill #148. I ask you have courage enough to stand up against bullying, even if that bullying is coming from your own party. Stand up for showing respect for labour laws, and for the people who are dedicating their lives to the children of this province.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Trites
Elementary Music Specialist
NSTU Member
Concerned Nova Scotian

From: ceabriel <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 9:26 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

Law Amendments Committee Members:

I am writing to protest the Public Service Sustainability Act. Due to the timing of the introduction of this Bill, I, like many Nova Scotians, cannot attend the Law Amendments meetings to speak in person. I hope that, by sending you my concerns, my voice will be heard.

I am a public school teacher who has taught in this province for more than 20 years. While working with students daily, coaching and involving myself in a variety of extra curricular activities with students, I am also very involved in my professional association and I work hard to promote professional development and the advancement of my fellow teachers.

NSTU members recently voted against our provincial tentative agreement due to their obvious well-placed distrust of this government. Our members refused to ratify a deal which was offered with the guillotine of legislation hanging over our heads.

This government has shown absolute disdain for collective bargaining and has turned a deaf ear to teachers when designing their education reform package. Page 17 of the Education Minister's Action Plan and threats made by the Premier made true collective bargaining an impossibility. Now, Finance Minister Randy Delorey has introduced the Public Service Sustainability Act which, if passed, will remove the rights of Nova Scotians to bargain wages collectively, will end our Long-term Service award, and will limit the role of arbitrators in the future.

This Bill is a small-minded attempt to punish teachers and other unionized workers of Nova Scotia. It is short-sighted and very harmful to the future of our province. By using the workers of Nova Scotia as a means by which to balance budgets, this government is creating a race to the bottom. In order to create economic growth and prosperity for all Nova Scotians, we must create reasonable and fair wage and benefits packages for our workers. In order to encourage workers to remain in our province, we should be creating a climate of hope, not one of worry, unrest and anger. We need to invest in education so that the millions of taxpayer dollars which have been given to corporations such as Irving can at least be used to provide jobs for skilled Nova Scotians. If we are to keep young people in this province, we must educate them so they can create the jobs needed to sustain and grow Nova Scotia.

By introducing this bill on a Monday evening, before a predicted storm, and during the holiday season, this government is trying to limit debate on Bill 148. These tactics are immoral, unconstitutional and undemocratic. Liberals have lost touch with the hard-working people of this province. Teachers helped elect this government on the promise that they were going to listen to our concerns. Instead, this government is trying to silence us. Shame!

How can Nova Scotians trust this government or sit down to negotiate with Liberals in the future? The actions of the Liberal government have broken our trust. The MacNeil movers are indeed moving jobs out of this province.

Cherie Abriel

From: Perry, Rosemarie <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 8:56 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

Tuesday, December 15th, 2015

Dear Chair of the Law Amendments Committee:

My name is Rosemarie Perry and I am writing to oppose Bill 148. I wanted to come in to speak; however, I was told that the list was full this evening and the only time available to me would be when I am teaching.

Teaching has become an increasingly challenging as a career choice and this already difficult job will worsen with the conditions of the government's Bill 148. Not only has the government stripped us of our constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, but this bill also impedes our ability to advocate for funding that would improve our students learning environments which are our working conditions.

I teach visual arts in a classroom that comfortably seats 25 adult size bodies. I typically am jam-packed with thirty plus each semester, each class, plus IPP and adapted program students and often an EPA or two. I often have newly arrived international and EAL/refugee students (i.e. Students who read at grade one level and students who read at a grade 12 level in the same classroom; some who have severe mental health conditions; some who speak no English at all; some who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and so much more) that I communicate with through charades. I am more lucky than others as I teach a very visual subject I can often use lots of visual examples but have to be extra careful when teaching lessons with knives and lino-cutters for example. My budget for classroom supplies is seriously lacking, not having increased in the last 5 years at my current school and having been downgraded several thousand from the previous school prior to this one. I am forced to order substandard materials and often subsidize out of my own pocket to the tune of hundreds of dollars a school year. I am not the only teacher I know that does this. We do it because we care about what we teach, but we shouldn't have to.

Class room sizes, diverse classroom composition, lack of human and physical resources (not enough Resource or EAL teachers, not enough supplies/tools for the class and so on), little to no consultation with active teachers on curriculum or assessment (ex. implementing provincial assessments that cost so much money and yet have no impact on learning), increasing demands for duplicate reporting and other types of redundant virtual paperwork, an expectation that teachers are on-call 24/7 via email, and never-ending and ever-changing direction on procedures and policies and protocols make me think about changing my career in the last eleven years I have left. At the beginning of my career I watched people ending theirs teach with such enjoyment, as they were relaxed and fulfilled. At my stage, I should not be run off my feet, stressed out weekly, and fighting to balance the excessive demands of my job with the needs of my family!!

I have been teaching for over twenty years and it is demeaning to see my chosen profession be forsaken as it also means that my students are being demeaned and devalued. I teach them the importance of standing up against bullies in many different contexts especially ones where they are in the majority. I urge all Liberals to have the courage to vote against Bill 148; to show Nova Scotia's youth who will build up our economy if we allow them an opportunity, that you support them and their educators. I expect all members of the Conservative and NDP parties to vote against Bill 148 because it is wrong and it violates workers' rights.

The only way for this province to develop to its full potential is for our government to invest in its future; its people. Build people first and everything else will follow.

With hope and respect,

Rosemarie Perry

Rosemarie L. Perry
Visual Arts Teacher 10, 11, 12
Halifax West High School
Room b327
(902)457-8900 ext. [REDACTED]
RPerry@hrsbc.ca

Tuesday December 15th, 2015

Dear Chair of the Law Amendments Committee:

My name is Kathy-Lee Brickenden and I oppose Bill 148. I am a proud teacher with 40 years experience teaching in Canada and abroad. I have been with the Halifax Regional School Board for over 19 years. Nowhere else have I seen such a blatant disregard for the educational welfare of young people, except maybe in the third world conditions of some of our First Nation Reserves, where I have also taught.

Teaching has always been a rewarding and challenging vocation yet it can be incredibly difficult at times; the government's Bill 148 is going to worsen existing conditions. Not only is the government attempting to strip teachers of our constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, this bill will also hinder our advocacy for funding, funding that would improve our students learning environments which just so happen to be our working conditions.

It has always amazed me how high school students and their classroom conditions have been ignored by everyone. There are no class size caps in high school unless a course is being piloted; there are insufficient reading and work materials for courses without textbooks. There is a total lack of lower level reading materials for EAL students with limited English Language Skills. My school is the magnet high school for New Canadians and we are proud of the services we provide, however, very few of which are financed fully by our government agencies. Mental health issues continue to increase among all the students; and of course now we have even more students suffering from PTSD and yet we do not have one mental health worker. Why is that?

I have often wondered why teachers who have been and continue to be very active in the classrooms of our schools are not consulted by the School Boards or Dept. of Education. It is a mystery. So many of the consultants at the board level are not high school experienced teachers, or teachers with recent and relevant experience, why is that? How can they be directing and creating policies and curriculum without consulting me? Professional Development would better serve the schools if they were allowed to be school-based managed. (This would be a lot less costly than the school board system we currently have.) Each school represents a particular demographic neighbourhood with specific needs, and the teachers and school administrators of the neighbourhood school know them best.

There have been increasing demands on us for our time outside the classroom such as the duplicate reporting and other types of redundant virtual paperwork, an expectation that teachers are on-call 24/7 via email, and the endless list of additional procedures and steps related to policies and protocols. Teachers already work far beyond their contractual obligations and do so willingly when it is for the welfare and the benefit of their students. Our objections to Bill 148 have absolutely nothing to do with salary; we are paid well, let me make that perfectly clear. If it were about the money teachers wouldn't be spending hundreds of dollars of their own money each year on supplies for their classrooms. The students

are the ones that are continually short-changed by government's narrow vision of what investing in education means. Invest in the classrooms and you invest and support the students of Nova Scotia and allow the teachers of Nova Scotia to do what they do best, teach successfully with pride and dignity.

Respectively,

Kathy-Lee Brickenden
English Dept. Head
Halifax West High School

From: Megan Moriarty <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 8:10 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

To the members of the Nova Scotia Law Amendments Committee:

I am a new teacher in Nova Scotia. I count myself extremely lucky to have a job and a permanent contract. Most people in my graduating class (2009) are looking at an average of 5 more years of substitute teaching before they can have this status. As a result, too many of these talented young teachers have given up and left the province or changed professions.

During my first three years of teaching, I stayed at school every afternoon until 6 and did another 3-4 hours of work at home every school night. I did not feel I had the time for physical exercise or social activities. Despite this, I remained passionate about my profession and I have continued to devote most of my time and energy to the students in my care. Instead of feeling supported in my work with Nova Scotia students, however, at professional development sessions and in the media I have repeatedly heard that my classroom challenges are a direct result of my failings as an educator. They have nothing to do with larger classes, more special needs students, more children living in poverty, poor mental health treatment access and the pressure on educators to collect "data" instead of educating our children.

Recently, NSTU members voted to reject a tentative agreement that the government threatened to legislate if we did not accept. We rejected, not because of the money, but because we are tired of being bullied and blamed for the flaws in a system over which we are given very little control. The teachers of Nova Scotia did nothing wrong. We have the right to say no. This is our democratic right as Canadian citizens and members of a union. This legislation deprives us of these rights. This is not what government is supposed to be!

From: Susan Zurawski <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 8:08 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Plea for Due Process

Dear Sir/Madame,

I am school teacher with the Chignecto Central School Board who is quite frankly in shock with the under handed way our premier is forcing through legislation that has not gone through the bargaining due process. I cannot understand how this draconian legislation has gone as far as it has. The unions of teachers, nurses and our civil services should have every right to negotiate in good faith with the government.

Our school superintendent Gary Adams, was asked to share a letter from Karen Casey to all CCRSB teachers today. She wrote, "The legislation introduced today, Dec. 14, is consistent with the wage increases in the tentative agreement negotiated with the NSTU in November. It does not stop us from returning to the table. Negotiators are currently exploring dates in January to resume collective bargaining." This is NOT what Stephen McNeil is telling us. We are being threatened with legislation either this evening or tomorrow, with absolutely no talk of returning to the bargaining table.

The collective agreement is not just working conditions OR wages, it has always been both, thus the word COLLECTIVE.

My objection is actually not about either wages or working conditions, but about DUE PROCESS and the right to meet at the bargaining table and to negotiate in good faith. Our rights have been denied. Mr. McNeil promised to respect the collective bargaining rights during his election campaign, and now he taking that right from our unions. With 75,000 union members having their rights taken from them, it's not likely this government will find itself elected again in two years time.

Do the right thing and put a stop to this unfair legislation.

Concerned Canadian,

Susan Zurawski

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of C.C. <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 8:03 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Fwd: Bill #148 Nova Scotia: please vote no.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: C.C. <[REDACTED]>
Date: 15 December 2015 at 19:55
Subject: Bill #148 Nova Scotia: please vote no.
To: legc.offic@novascotia.ca
Cc: dianawhalen@gmail.com, geoff@geoffregan.ca

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a new nurse. I graduated in October, 2014, with a BScN, and I am a Registered Nurse currently practising in Acute care in Halifax.

Basically, I am a floor nurse, a new graduate, and a professional: all of these designations being a needed part of Nova Scotia (regarding retention) and the future of the care of *your* family members, or you, should you need nursing care.

I have a large student loan, because I have two degrees and am a single parent. I am being actively recruited by the US and the Canadian North to do the work that I do at significantly larger reimbursement.

Pray tell, why do I stay?

If bill #148 goes through, I can tell you that my interest in staying in Nova Scotia to be the caring and dedicated nurse that I am becomes an interest in me going elsewhere to practise my craft, provide for my family, and to pay off my enormous student loans.

The unit where I work is chronically understaffed as we speak. If I leave, if others leave, then the nurses left will become even more over-stressed and over-worked, leaving patients in less-safe conditions.

We are already understaffed 9 out of every 10 shifts that I work.

Read that sentence again: 9 shifts of every 10, we are understaffed. And people's lives are on the line.

Do you understand what that is like? To show up every day at work and pray that your finite mortal self can meet the emotional, physical, and medical needs of 4-6 very ill patients? Patients who cannot remember to eat; Who need bathing; constant assessments; blood transfusions; changes in medications; a hand to hold; a listening ear; an hour to explain to family members what is happening; physicians and residents to be contacted (sometimes several times per shift per patient); blood-work to be followed up upon; emergency ECG's to be called; to be held up when they suddenly lose consciousness; code blues to be called; ... the list goes on. This is not an easy career.

There is never a shift that I leave exactly on time. There is never a shift that I do not give everything I have in terms of caring about this person, this patient, their life, their comfort, their safety, their pain control, their family's fears and grief.

Please understand that I am responsible every shift for many people's safety and lives, and that the compensation (monetarily) that I receive for this responsibility does not even come close to what my nursing attention, education, professionalism, and caring provides for your loved ones.

Bill #148 feels like an insult to my profession. It reminds me of the tenuous decision that I make *every month* about whether to accept more lucrative offers 'from away.'

Consider how many new registered nurses will be tempted to leave the province should this bill be passed.

I love living here in Nova Scotia. But not so much that I will stay to become burnt out. I cannot watch my precious patients suffer due to under-staffing. I cannot let my profession be so undervalued.

Vote carefully. Consider what your own income is in compared to mine. Consider what my responsibilities are compared to yours. Consider carefully. Because this is important.

Vote no to bill #148.

Thank-you for your time and attention to this matter,
Sincerely,

C. Campbell

BScMathematics, BScNursing, Registered Nurse

From: Shelly Tonen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 7:29 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Letter in support of opposing Bill 148

Dear Chair of the Law Amendments Committee:

My name is Shelly Tonen and I am writing to oppose Bill 148. I wanted to come in to speak; however, I was informed that the list was full this evening and the only time available would be when I am teaching.

Teaching has become an incredibly difficult job and the government's Bill 148 is going to worsen these conditions. Not only has the government stripped us of our constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, but this bill also impedes our ability to advocate for funding that would improve our students learning environments which are our working conditions.

I began my teaching career in 1993 and over the last 20+ years, I have seen a major decline in the educational landscape. We are graduating students who can't read, can't problem-solve, and can't do basic math. How do we expect Canada as a nation to compete globally when our citizens have been short-changed?

The reasons for this drop in education are many and complex. Here are some of my observations. Class sizes are creeping up and up and it is unacceptable, especially when the students are becoming more diverse and needier. I have taught classes of 12-15 and I have taught classes of 35. Let me tell you there is a huge difference in the quality of education that the smaller classes get. They benefit from more one on one time with their teacher. They have a voice and thoughts that actually have an opportunity to be heard by their teacher as well as their peers. It is very typical these days to have 2-4 students on IPPs in every classroom. I have to plan lessons for Science 10. And then I have to spend more time planning lessons that "look like" Science 10 but they have to be at a grade 4 level or a grade 7 level. And then multiply this by 3 to cover all the classes that I teach. I have sometimes spent 3 hours planning a lesson for one student.

I teach high school and I am finding more and more that the incoming students do not have the prerequisite skills for high school. They have never failed in elementary and junior high. They have not been held accountable for meeting deadlines. They haven't developed many study strategies, not to mention time management or organizational skills. They haven't even been accountable for attending. I have some students that miss ridiculous amounts of classes and there is no consequence for it. It ends up putting even more work on the classroom teacher because it seems to be expected that it is *our* responsibility to teach them everything they missed and give them every opportunity to make up work.

More and more of our prep time seems to be disappearing, taken up by duty and PLC meetings. This leaves more and more stuff to be done at home. I knew when I chose to be a teacher that I would have homework and have to mark assessments in my evenings and on weekends, but the amount of time spent away from my family on these school duties is increasing at an alarming rate to the point where I really have to start evaluating my work-life balance. And then there are the hours and hours that teachers spend on extra-curricular activities to ensure that there are a variety of activities, sports, clubs, etc for students to enrich their school experience. Many, many teachers dedicate countless hours to these clubs and they do it because they enjoy their students. At my school last month, all the teachers added up their volunteer hours and among a staff of 35 teachers we had accumulated over 1200 hours! I am the yearbook advisor at my school and I love

to see students get involved and have success in creating something as lasting as a yearbook, but with the demands on my time ever-increasing these days, something has got to give. I would hate to see it be these extracurricular activities that students so enjoy.

In short, the whole system is broken. Instead of cutting funding and making the people on the front lines with students, the teachers, feel like worthless citizens, our government should be increasing funding to find the solutions and begin to fix this system. Our government should be investing in the education of its future citizens. One of the problems that I run across with my non-teacher peers is that they think school is the same as when they went to school. Let me assure you, IT IS NOTHING like when I went to school. If you think this is so, then I urge you to walk a mile in the shoes of any teacher in this province. It pains me to see the government trying to pass this bill with no regard for teacher value. I teach my students to stand up to bullies and I feel like that is what is happening to teachers right now - that we are being bullied. I urge all Liberals to have the courage to vote against Bill 148; to show Nova Scotia's youth who will build up our economy if we allow them an opportunity, that you support them and their educators. I expect all members of the Conservative and NDP parties to vote against Bill 148 because it is wrong and it violates workers' rights.

The only way for this province to develop to its full potential is for our government to invest in its future; its people. Build people first and everything else will follow.

With hope and respect,

Shelly Tonen

From: Liane Bradbury <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 11:45 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Fwd: Teacher concerns to address at next ammendment meeting Wed Dec 16, 2015 for Bill 148

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Liane Bradbury <[REDACTED]>
Date: December 16, 2015 at 2:05:52 AM AST
To: "legc.office@novascotiawrittenout.ca" <legc.office@novascotiawrittenout.ca>
Subject: **Teacher concerns to address at next ammendment meeting Wed Dec 16, 2015 for Bill 148**

In response to Bill 148, the concerns I have as an educator in our public school system are as follows:

1. Not enough Educational Program Assistants (EPA) in the classroom to offer support to students who have high needs behaviourally. EPAs are spread thin amongst other teachers, or not provided at all. Lack of EPA support allows the challenged student's learning to be difficult and other student's learning difficult. It is very difficult for a teacher to conduct a lesson, take care of the rest of the needs of the classroom and watch to make sure a child who is a physical threat to the students and staff doesn't cause issues. There needs to be more money put towards EPA hires and enough EPAs allotted to classroom teachers to ensure these particular students are handled accordingly throughout their day, not for an hr or half a day... all day.
2. There should be adequate training or courses taken to be an EPA and their salary should be much higher for what they do. This will promote more employment in this field and helps teachers greatly.
3. There needs to be guidance counselors in lower elementary to help students cope and talk about emotional and mental issues that they themselves cannot handle. Teachers alone are not equipped to handle what kids are dealing with these days, it doesn't just start in Junior High. There could even be floating guidance counselors that focus on schools in certain districts and served the needs of those school families at the elementary level and up. It is necessary for these positions!!!!

4. Class sizes should be reduced past grade 2. Caps should be put on all grades, especially lower elementary and Jr. high. Too many kids in a classroom is not manageable and learning suffers.

5. Service Award should not be taken away or freezes put on our salaries. Our job is tough with limited resources, and yet we are expected to make great gains with the future generations. Strip us of everything to support ourselves and you will see unhappy teachers who will quit, not care about their work as an educator or there will be people who will not even bother entering the profession. We need motivation financially like any other type of employee, that's just how business works.

6. We need resources in our classrooms. We need class sets in books, manipulatives, funds for extracurricular activities and various classroom needs. Not enough money is going into this. In other professions, employees do not go out to buy their own supplies to do their job right, why are we?

We are looking at education all wrong in this province and country. If you want innovators, successors, great minds to lead us, our money needs to be spent on our education system, not stripped from it. Teachers jobs are difficult and we try our best. I do not believe this is a job that little can be done or done poorly, it's impossible. The public has a terrible perception of a much needed profession. If education and teachers are not supported by the government and have some of these needs mentioned addressed, we are setting our future society up to fail.

From: Melanie Morrissey [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 11:36 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill c148

This letter is to protest bill c148. It is not only a draconian measure and insult to all public sector employees but it is stripping employees of their right to collective bargaining as guaranteed to us in federal law. I can't believe I supported the liberal government in the last election and I am certain you will not have the support of the majority of Nova Scotia if this is passed!

Please reconsider this heavy-handed Bill. It is completely absurd and undemocratic.

Sent from my iPad

From: Carla Bernier <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 11:19 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Opposition to Bill 148

Dear Chair of the Law Amendments Committee:

My name is Carla Bernier and I am writing to oppose Bill 148. I wanted to come in to speak; however, I was informed that the list was full this evening and the only time available would be when I am teaching.

Teaching has become an incredibly difficult job and the government's Bill 148 is going to worsen these conditions. Not only has the government stripped us of our constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, but this bill also impedes our ability to advocate for funding that would improve our students learning environments which are our working conditions.

I have had classes of 30 plus students where more than half needed resource support while a forth were on individualized personal programs. These students were several grades below the grade I was supposed to be teaching. Without proper support, teachers cannot meet every students' individual needs. We as teachers take a lot to heart. We want to do everything possible to help our student however we feel hopeless in this effort as we don't have the necessary support to do so. The demands on teachers have increased. The government wants to implement reporting over the internet, which is very informative for parents. It requires a great deal of time to do these tasks however we don't receive allotted time to do this. The time to do administrative work is taken from preparing for our classes. We are expected to post homework and update our web pages to further communicate with our students and their parents. If proper time was given we could do this while delivering interesting lessons to our students.

Teachers benefit greatly by meeting with other teachers through professional development. We are able to share ideas and assessment methods instead of wasting time reinventing the wheel. This is virtually non existent.

The never-ending and ever-changing direction on procedures and policies and protocols has also affected the increased workload. Just when you have started to settle in with a procedure with your students and their parents, it changes. For example the reporting process.

The class composition has also changed. We are supporting students with diverse mental, social and physical needs. We have students with PTSD, ADD, autism, behavioural issues, depression, schizophrenia, students who are struggling with their sexual identity, gay, transgender, etc.

There is a lack of human and physical resources. I don't have enough textbooks for my students. They are unable to take them home to do work. We don't have resource support for our French immersion students. This then becomes my responsibility.

I have been teaching for 18 years and it pains me to see my beloved profession be devalued as it also means that my students are being devalued. I teach them the importance of standing up against bullies in many different contexts especially ones where they are in the majority. I urge all Liberals to have the courage to vote against Bill 148; to show Nova Scotia's youth who will build up our economy if we allow them an opportunity, that you support them and their educators. I expect all members of the Conservative and NDP parties to vote against Bill 148 because it is wrong and it violates workers' rights.

The only way for this province to develop to its full potential is for our government to invest in its future; its people. Build people first and everything else will follow.

With hope and respect,

Carla Bernier

From: pjedwards <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 11:09 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Re: Bill 148

To Whom It May Concern:

I am told that all speaker spots are filled but that the committee will receive this email as my talking points to Bill 148

My first thought is to whether this Bill is legal under the Charter of Rights? I am hoping that someone would could clarify how; I would appreciate it.

Secondly, I was of the impression that the right to collective bargaining was protected and this Bill 148 is an affront to all or any attempts to negotiate in GOOD FAITH. In fact, the GOOD FAITH shown by this bill forces me to question the structure and intent of any government that would pass such legislature and not include themselves as Public Servants. Why are the MLA's not included in Bill 148? Aren't they in the public service as well?

I am hoping that we had more respect for the people who serve the public and society's best interest.

I am a teacher who would be profoundly affected by the change of service award. I would go from receiving 57% to 17% which would equate to roughly a difference of 35k. I am upset that I can not have my money immediately to invest as I see fit, especially as the government is not inspiring any confidence in the fact that the money will be there when I retire. I hear this change is more about accounting practices rather than actual economic impact. If that is the case, shame on you to cost my single income family of 4, \$35K that I was owed over a clerical balance. No wonder so many contemporaries have chosen to leave Nova Scotia for employment opportunities else where.

I am amazed that a government would choose to take away the right of teachers to negotiate for fair compensation, when we routinely are asked to volunteer for so many extra activities (marking, planning, creating assessments, coaching sports teams, drama, music, clubs etc.) related to our jobs. If this bill is passed I will not do any more volunteer activities, the stress of a second job will be too difficult to facilitate any volunteering. I will ask for overtime, when required or the hiring of additional personnel, like most public servants are entitled. I do not feel comfortable doing this, but if this is the climate our government wants for learning, then message received.

I would humbly request that everyone defeat Bill 148.

Regards,

Preman Edwards

[REDACTED]
Dartmouth NS
[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

> From: pjedwards <pjeowards@nstu.ca>
> To: Legc.office@novascotia.ca
> Date: 12/15/15 15:43
> Subject: Bill 148
>

Subject line: Bill 148

Wednesday, December 16th, 2015

Message:

Dear Chair of the Law Amendments Committee:

My name is Shauna Dosman and I am writing to oppose Bill 148. I wanted to come in to speak; however, I was informed that the list was full last evening and the only time available would be when I am teaching.

Teaching has become an incredibly difficult job and the government's Bill 148 is going to worsen these conditions. Not only has the government stripped us of our constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, but this bill also impedes our ability to advocate for funding that would improve our students learning environments which are our working conditions.

All of the following are concerns we could address through the collective bargaining process:

- **Class room sizes, diverse classroom composition** (i.e. Students who read at grade one level and students who read at a grade 12 level in the same classroom; some who have severe mental health conditions; some who speak no English at all; some who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and so much more)
- **lack of human and physical resources** (not enough Resource or EAL teachers, not enough books for the class and so on)
- **little to no consultation with active teachers** on curriculum or assessment (ex. implementing provincial assessments that cost so much money and yet have no impact on learning),
- **increasing demands** for duplicate reporting and other types of redundant virtual paperwork, an expectation that teachers are on-call 24/7 via email
- **never-ending and ever-changing direction** on procedures and policies and protocols.

I have been teaching for twenty one years and it pains me to see my beloved profession be devalued as it also means that my students are being devalued. I teach them the importance of standing up against bullies in many different contexts especially ones where they are in the majority. I urge all Liberals to have the courage to vote against Bill 148; to show Nova Scotia's youth who will build up our economy if we allow them an opportunity, that you support them and their educators. I expect all members of the Conservative and NDP parties to vote against Bill 148 because it is wrong and it violates workers' rights.

The only way for this province to develop to its full potential is for our government to invest in its future; its people. Build people first and everything else will follow.

With hope and respect,

Shauna Dosman

From: Kathleen M. Roy <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 10:59 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: concerns as a teacher

Law Amendments Committee,

I am writing my concerns since I am unable to attend the march on the Legislature today. This is because my day does not end after classes are dismissed. I have two meetings after school which involve reviewing a psychological assessment report on a student and the second to do with programming for Learning Disabled students.

I am a teacher of twenty two years with Chignecto Central and I want to voice my concerns. It is imperative to understand the negative impact government cutbacks have had on the classroom. It is so important to listen to teachers when designing education policy. Teachers are educating our future generation and need to be heard and respected.

Thank you,
Kathleen Roy

16 December 2015

Jennifer McKeane
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Dear Legislative Counsel Office and Law Amendments Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Bill 148. I do so tentatively, as I feel vulnerable as a public sector employee to speak out against such a Bill, but I feel I must make some comments.

When I joined the Civil Service in 2007, I did so because I was at a stage in my life where job security and good wages were becoming increasingly important to me. My husband and I wanted to start a family, buy a house and contribute to the community, all in Nova Scotia, the province where we have chosen to live.

Both my husband and I are lucky as we have good jobs as public sector employees, and I am thankful for that, and we live comfortably. We have been fortunate over the years to move up through the steps in our compensation range each year within various progressively responsible positions. I am now 'topped out', which means that according to section 13 (1) and (2) of Bill 148, for the next two years, that would mean no step increments in compensation range, therefore, no wage increases at all.

Like most people, we juggle things around to make ends meet on some months, particularly around Christmas. I worry how much more we would need to juggle over the next two years when we experience the cost of living increase all around us. Bills have to be paid and we need to eat, but we may need to make some spending decisions with disposable income. This is the same spending that helps local businesses thrive by shopping locally for Christmas gifts. The same spending that allows me to contribute to the community to organizations such as United Way, ISANS/Syrian Refugees, Phoenix House, and Christmas Angels. The same spending that allowed me to take my children to stay at White Point to see the bunnies on her birthday. This spending contributes to a strong economy in Nova Scotia.

Many Public Sector employees are not in well-paying jobs. Not all can currently make these choices with their disposable income. If I am worried about being able to make these disposable spending choices, there are certainly many others out there who are even more worried today

I am worried that our best talent in the public sector will simply drift off in pursuit of better opportunities. I am hoping to continue raising my two girls in Nova Scotia, and I hope that one day at least one of them will choose to serve the public as a public sector employee, but in the end, we will do what is best for our family.

There are other things I am worried about in the Bill, such as the Long Service Award being restricted to time accumulated until April 2015 at frozen compensation rates. When I can retire in 20 or so years and my daughters are still at University, how valuable will this award be at 2015 wage rates to help assist them through university?

Please reconsider the passage of Bill 148 and not let it proceed. Please let the collective bargaining process proceed fully, and follow the already established methods to bring collective agreements to conclusion.

Sincerely,

Jennifer McKeane

From: Lisa M. Macnutt <MacNuttL@ccrsb.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 9:52 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Concerned

I am writing to express my concerns regarding our collective bargaining rights as members of the NSTU. I feel it is imperative that teachers have a voice and that this government provide an opportunity for teachers working in the classroom to be able to express their concerns. We are overwhelmed with a growing number of responsibilities and demands to meet the needs of a rapidly incredibly growing number of at-risk students. Meeting the needs of our students in large classes is not possible. Choosing to ignore us will only make this situation worse for years to come. I am protesting Bill 148 and urge this government to consider how this Bill will affect the future of our students.

Lisa MacNutt

School Guidance Counsellor
Bible Hill Junior High
(902) 896-5554
(902) 896-5504 (Fax)
macnuttl@ccrsb.ca

"The content of this message is intended to be confidential between the sender and the intended recipient(s). In the event that you have inadvertently received this message, please inform the sender and delete this message."

From: Bullock, Christine <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 8:28 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

Dear Chair of the Law Amendments Committee:

I have been a teacher in the Halifax area for sixteen; eight years in the junior high setting and the last eight years in high school. I and many of my colleagues, have experienced a consistent decrease in support for many challenges facing our students impacting many in their ability to graduate and become contributing members of society. It really comes down to this: do we continue to cut and pay later or do we stop the hemorrhaging and realize the future of our country relies on the innovation and creativity of our young people.

This bill will strip us of our constitutional right to fair, collective bargaining. Good faith has disappeared in the government's handling of the collective bargaining process and this bill further

detracts from a respectful back-and-forth exchange.

Yours truly,

Christine L. Bullock

Social Studies Dept.,

Halifax West High School

902-457-8900, ext. [REDACTED]

From: Carol McKay <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 7:41 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

My name is Carol McKay and I am writing to oppose Bill 148. I wanted to come in to speak; however, I was informed that the list was full this evening and the only time available would be when I am teaching.

Teaching has become an incredibly difficult job and the government's Bill 148 is going to worsen these conditions. Not only has the government stripped us of our constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, but this bill also impedes our ability to advocate for funding that would improve our students learning environments which are our working conditions.

PUT IN YOUR PERSONAL SITUATION HERE EXAMPLE:

Class room sizes, diverse classroom composition (i.e. Students who read at grade one level and students who read at a grade 12 level in the same classroom; some who have severe mental health conditions; some who speak no English at all; some who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and so much more), **lack of human and physical resources** (not enough Resource or EAL teachers, not enough books for the class and so on), **little to no consultation with active teachers** on curriculum or assessment (ex. implementing provincial assessments that cost so much money and yet have no impact on learning), **increasing demands** for duplicate reporting and other types of redundant virtual paperwork, an expectation that teachers are on-call 24/7 via email, and **never-ending and ever-changing direction** on procedures and policies and protocols.

I have been teaching for twenty years and it pains me to see my beloved profession be devalued as it also means that my students are being devalued. I teach them the importance of standing up against bullies in many different contexts especially ones where they are in the majority. I urge all Liberals to have the courage to vote against Bill 148; to show Nova Scotia's youth who will build up our economy if we allow them an opportunity, that you support them and their educators. I expect all members of the Conservative and NDP parties to vote against Bill 148 because it is wrong and it violates workers' rights.

The only way for this province to develop to its full potential is for our government to invest in its future; its people. Build people first and everything else will follow.

With hope and respect,

Carol McKay

Notes for a Submission

By

Stephen Newson, Board Member

Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union

To the

Law Amendments Committee on Bill 148

Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act

December 14, 2015

Thank you, Madam Chairperson and members of the Committee for the opportunity to speak with you about Bill 148 – the Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act.

I am a Board Member of the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union. I was elected to the Board from the Civil Service Professional Occupational Council. I have also had the pleasure of being a member of the Union Negotiating Committee for at least three rounds of collective bargaining at the table with the Employer. I am a career civil servant employed with Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal as a Policy Advisor.

Over the 30 years, I have worked with the employer to meet their needs. I started as a researcher on transportation issues, that role changed to become a policy advisor on regulatory issues; I went to a different section in the Department to advise on environmental issues which meant upgrading my skills on my time. My point being that civil service employees have recognized the changing needs of government. We have been flexible about the work we do and the roles we have taken on that have continued to build over time. Our positions and roles deserve to be recognized and treated with respect.

Nova Scotia needs to retain talented and skilled public sector workers. This is difficult to do when wages and working conditions are better in provinces like Ontario and Alberta. Bill 148 does nothing to recruit and retain public sector workers. I am at an age where I am looking forward to repurposing myself. This government is making my decision much easier to leave government. However, I worry about;

- Who is going to want to work for the government?

- What skills will they have? And

- What service will they provide to Nova Scotians?

- overall what will be results of this government's actions on the Province of Nova Scotia?

We have seen that this government is willing to legislate rather than consult and negotiate. We have seen several cases where they do the latter after the fact. Is this good government? Do people and businesses look at Nova Scotia and say why would I move to Nova Scotia? We need to attract people and business to Nova Scotia to improve our economy.

Respect for civil servants comes by negotiating our* collective agreement at the bargaining table and not through the heavy hand of legislation (employer and union). I believe the government actions over the past two years shows a lack of respect for the work we do and the commitment we have to the Province of Nova Scotia.

In the past, I looked forward to being a union representative at the union negotiating committee (UNC) at the bargaining table. We, the union and the employer, have been able to bring issues to the table to discuss our challenges openly. There have been disagreements but there was also learning, collaboration and at the end of the day an agreement.

When we did end up in arbitration and a binding agreement, we both won on some points and lost on other points. The arbitration process helped us reach a conclusion that recognized both positions. What do we have today! Bill 148.

Given the short notice, I do not pretend to understand all sections of Bill 148. However from what little I understand Bill 148 does not comply with the intent of the Civil Service Collective Bargaining Act. This legislation is extremely undemocratic. The Liberals are so concerned about public input that they opened it up to the public in the dead of night, a dark stormy night, a B grade film plot.

The proposed legislation removes items from the collective bargaining process. For example, an arbitrator is limited by the Act to address compensation according to government set limits. The accepted give and take at the bargaining table addresses compensation rates and ranges in consideration of other benefits at the table. It is not collective bargaining when the government takes away a portion of the tools as intended by the Civil Service Collective Bargaining Act.

Civil Servants do not have the right to strike. The Government's solution at the start of the civil service union many years ago was collective bargaining, including access to conciliation and binding arbitration. The current government is concerned about its ability to bargain effectively and has decided to change the rules of bargaining in its favor. If this does not work I wonder what the next step is for this government.

During the current round of "bargaining" the government brought us to the table under the threat of legislation. We did the best we could and sent an offer to our membership recommending acceptance.

The membership was confused with the union recommending acceptance; recognizing the threat of a legislated agreement. The membership was very clear in responding to the bargaining unit negotiating committee members that they were confused. The union is in the process of informing members about the offer and providing an opportunity to answer member questions. The members need information to make an informed vote.

The government response was to set a time line for the union to respond with a vote date. I was shocked at this heavy handed approach. Our approach is not new and it is an accepted approach across Canada. Unions provide sessions to inform and answer

member questions; sounds to me like a step in the democratic process leading to a vote: a vote where the union actually recommended acceptance.

The current actions of the government, in my mind, seek to intimidate the civil service union membership by threat of pecuniary measures, an unfair labor practice pursuant to Section 40 of the Civil Service Collective Bargaining Act (non-negotiated wage rates and placing limits on the Public Service Award).

I also take issue with the government press release where it was stated:

"The legislation also ensures newer, lower-paid public sector employees receive larger pay increases. Some will see step increases of as much as five per cent per year."

All employees, may be eligible for increments (step increases) pursuant to the collective agreement. The increments are earned based on the employees performance and has nothing to do with being "lower-paid" or newer employees. Yes, employees in a "new to them position" will likely earn increments for several years. The statement seems to be pointing out that the government is targeting "older" "well" paid employees. The statement is an unnecessary one for a government to make, clearly showing a lack of respect for a workforce whose average age is around 48 years old.

Negotiating cannot occur when you legislate your pre-conditions.

Respectfully submitted

Steve Newson

Board Member

NSGEU Local 8 - Civil Service

From: nfarr <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 5:32 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

I am writing to oppose Bill 148. I wanted to come in to speak; however, I was informed that the list was full this evening and the only time available would be when I am teaching.

Teaching has become an incredibly difficult job and the government's Bill 148 is going to worsen these conditions. Not only has the government stripped us of our constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, but this bill also impedes our ability to advocate for funding that would improve our students learning environments which are our working conditions.

Class room sizes, diverse classroom composition (i.e. Students who read at grade one level and students who read at a grade 12 level in the same classroom; some who have severe mental health conditions; some who speak no English at all; some who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and so much more), lack of human and physical resources (not enough Resource or EAL teachers, not enough books for the class and so on), little to no consultation with active teachers on curriculum or assessment (ex. implementing provincial assessments that cost so much money and yet have no impact on learning), increasing demands for duplicate reporting and other types of redundant virtual paperwork, an expectation that teachers are on-call 24/7 via email, and never-ending and ever-changing direction on procedures and policies and protocols.

I have been teaching for more than ten years and it pains me to see my beloved profession be devalued as it also means that my students are being devalued. I teach them the importance of standing up against bullies in many different contexts especially ones where they are in the majority. I urge all Liberals to have the courage to vote against Bill 148; to show Nova Scotia's youth who will build up our economy if we allow them an opportunity, that you support them and their educators. I expect all members of the Conservative and NDP parties to vote against Bill 148 because it is wrong and it violates workers' rights.

T

he only way for this province to develop to its full potential is for our government to invest in its future; its people. Build people first and everything else will follow.

With hope and respect,

Nick Farr

From: Nancie de la Chevotière <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 4:43 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

Tuesday December 15, 2015

Dear Chair of the Law Amendments Committee:

My name is Nancie de la Chevotiere and I am writing to oppose Bill 148. I wanted to come in to speak; however, I was informed that the list was full this evening and the only time available would be when I am teaching.

Teaching has become an incredibly difficult job and the government's Bill 148 is going to worsen these conditions. Not only has the government stripped us of our constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, but this bill also impedes our ability to advocate for funding that would improve our students learning environments which are our working conditions.

Class room sizes, diverse classroom composition (i.e. Students who read at grade one level and students who read at a grade 12 level in the same classroom; some who have severe mental health conditions; some who speak no English at all; some who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and so much more), **lack of human and physical resources** (not enough Resource or EAL teachers, not enough books for the class and so on), **little to no consultation with active teachers** on curriculum or assessment (ex. implementing provincial assessments that cost so much money and yet have no impact on learning), **increasing demands** for duplicate reporting and other types of redundant virtual paperwork, an expectation that teachers are on-call 24/7 via email, and **never-ending and ever-changing direction** on procedures and policies and protocols.

I have been teaching for twenty years and it pains me to see my beloved profession be devalued as it also means that my students are being devalued. I teach them the importance of standing up against bullies in many different contexts especially ones where they are in the majority. I urge all Liberals to have the courage to vote against Bill 148; to show Nova Scotia's youth who will build up our economy if we allow them an opportunity, that you support them and their educators. I expect all members of the Conservative and NDP parties to vote against Bill 148 because it is wrong and it violates workers' rights.

The only way for this province to develop to its full potential is for our government to invest in its future; its people. Build people first and everything else will follow.

With hope and respect,

Nancie de la Chevotière

From: Janet Berry <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 4:22 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Cc: Janet Berry
Subject: bill 148

I hope the following supportive note can help to show my point as a union member:

I can't believe we are hearing this regarding a wage freeze! A tax break has been announced for a great number of our people in my tax bracket (from the Federal government) , which is great and a long time coming, (because we just can not get ahead) and now you are suggesting we do not even deserve to get a small piece of a raise to allow for the cost of living increases that have been hitting our economy in NS! My job is extremely important and I deserve a wage increase, I work very hard to reach our financial targets to meet our commitment to "The Government" in turning over the profits to run other programs such as road maintenance and schools. What goes around comes around, we will all be depressed and look at leaving this province in search of financial stability.

Janet Berry
Store Manager NSLC
2501-Annapolis Royal
[REDACTED]

From: Lyons-Wetmore, Anne
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 3:39 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

I am truly disappointed with what this Government has been doing to the Public Sector Workers. Initially, I had hope with this Government but have been losing it since the day they went in power. This bill will impose a wage freeze because we have too many Administrators & top paying positions that are being taken care of. Therefore, we are being penalized. We are all hurting now, more than ever. This wage restraint is going to impact us greatly, as the cost of living continues to rise & our salary is getting smaller. I can't understand why this Government would want to privatize registries which have the highest revenues. Is it fair that a MLA will receive a pension after 2 years? We need that hope again.

December 15, 2015

To whom it may concern

We are writing this letter to express our objections to the Nova Scotia Government's motion to pass Bill 148. We believe that this is bargaining in bad faith. The Nova Scotia Government Employee's Union has made every effort to have open negotiations and has offered concessions to assist the Government in its efforts to manage its finances. In return, the Government has offered little and has made threats to the Civil Service and the Nova Scotia Government Employee's Union in an effort to intimidate a settlement.

At no time did the Government make an effort to have meaningful negotiations with the Unions. There was no discussion on what concessions could be made by both parties in this matter. The Government's position was strictly to state that it would define the terms of the contract and demand that the Unions make all of the concessions. This is not negotiation and this is not democracy.

As the Government is proposing Bill C148, the Nova Scotia Government Employee's Union has been meeting to discuss the offer made by Government. Instead of allowing the process to proceed through a democratic process, the Government has chosen to resort to legislation to force a settlement. We believe this is an unconstitutional action.

Furthermore, we note that the Government has chosen to take this action in an underhanded manner. The debate in the Legislature occurred at night, without notice to the public. The Law Amendments Committee is hearing submissions from the public during an ice storm, when it is unsafe for those who wish to make submissions to the Committee to travel. Though the Government can claim that it allowed the public to make submissions, in reality it used a storm to dismiss the opinions of those who wish to respond to this legislation.

We believe that the action of the Government is contrary to the democracy that Canadians stand for. The process that the Nova Scotia Government has taken to force this process on the civil service unions is shameful.

Though the Government may pass legislation that will force a new contract on its employees, it will do nothing to make the workings of government run smoothly. Already, the morale in government service is poor. In our office, we have been working at fifty percent staffing levels or less for the past several months. In addition to this level of staffing, we have also been expected to cover another district where the only employee assigned there has also been on a long term illness. As a result, we are managing not only our area of responsibility (four counties) but another county as well. We are spread too thin to be able to provide the citizens of Nova Scotia with the quality and timely services that they deserve. Contrary to what some may believe, we in the Civil Service take pride in our work and want to provide the best services to Nova Scotians that we can. The Government's practices of not replacing staff, especially in critical programs does not support this desire.

These are not concerns that are limited to our office. Our colleagues in other offices and agencies are having similar concerns. We and many other civil servants have worked many hours of overtime to ensure that those that we serve receive the services that they need. In most of these cases, we have either not submitted for the overtime, or the request for the overtime compensation, as defined in the Collective Agreement in denied.

Even more offensive is the tactics of the Government of fueling a resentment of the public against the civil servants. The professionals employed by the Province of Nova Scotia provide so many essential services to the citizens of Nova Scotia. These services include providing assistance and protection to vulnerable populations (i.e. children, the disabled, the elder), maintain highways and other infrastructure, provide health care in both the community and the hospital, provide security in Courts and correctional centers, to name only a few. Many of these jobs are without equal in the private sector and many of the professionals have many years of education and experience to provide these services. Employees such as nurses, engineers, social workers, are licensed professionals.

One issue to point out is that in the private sector, if you have to utilize the services of a licensed professional, one expects to pay a significant amount for those services because of the amount of education and responsibility that those professionals assume. Think of such professionals as lawyers, engineers, plumbers, electricians, etc. when we retain these professionals in the private sector, the cost of their services is what it is, regardless of the state of our bank account. Though professionals in the civil service do not expect to make as much as their private sector counterparts, they still should be paid a wage that is reasonable within the market.

The Government has allowed some members of the public to believe that civil servants are overpaid and do little work. In reality, many civil servants do not make large salaries and struggle as much as those who are underpaid in the private sector. We are offended that the Government has used tis opportunity to reinforce this stereotype instead of showing the public what the civil service does for Nova Scotians. Furthermore, the Government has chosen to reinforce this stereotype by its disrespectful treatment of its civil servants. Where those in the private sector have complained about benefits that government employees may receive, the government has not advocated to those employers to improve the benefits and pension plans that they too deserve.

It is our belief that there will be a fall out from the passing of Bill 148. The cost of living will continue to increase over the term of the contract. Our salary will only go so far. When this happens, we will spend less money. This will affect the businesses within our communities. We will have less income to shop in stores, go to restaurants, and see a show. As a result, the businesses in our community will also feel the effects of this legislation.

It should also be noted that with the poor morale within the Civil Service, it is becoming harder to attract young workers coming out of colleges and universities to work in Nova Scotia. As we have seen in the past, Atlantic Canadians have been travelling to other parts of Canada to seek employment. Once they leave the province, it is hard to get them to return.

Given these concerns, we ask that the Legislature reconsider its plan to pass this Legislation.

Thank-you for your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

Stephen Boyd

Karen Ramsay

Marie Williams

From: Justin T. Woods <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 4:05 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

I will be greatly effected by this bill should it pass. From what I have read about this bill so far it doesn't sound good for me. I understand that it was designed to save money but at what cost? I am a computer technician in the CCRSB school board. I work in 5 schools and I maintain 1108 computers. I am also responsible for writing all the code to keep all the systems in the board updated regularly. That is over 14000 computers. There is no one on staff that can do what I do. If you have a child in one of the CCRSB schools I am the person that made it possible for them to be updated for the last 6 years. I am over worked and greatly under appreciated. I am highly skilled and knowledgeable worker critical to boards continued smooth operation. I get notifications daily about jobs I can get out of province that would pay nearly double what I get paid here. I am not motivated by money though. I just wish to make the best education experience I can for my kids. This position enables me to make the most difference for the better that I can for our NS kids. I am a great budgeter and don't make frivolous purchases. I maintain a nice house in a good neighborhood. I save up for the luxuries in life. I have been saving up for the past 2 years for a new TV that will be the family present this year for Christmas. We don't make a lot of money as is. This bill is designed to attack me and people like me in this province. How long can I keep justifying staying in NS if they treat me in such a way? When will I decide to investigate those daily notifications and pull up stakes and leave NS like so many of my peers?

How can this be democratic? It removes freedom and choice. Is our government so broken that it has to restrict freedom and choice from it's workers to save money? The workers weren't the cause of the shortfall they shouldn't be punished for it. Collective bargaining shouldn't be restricted it should be protected. Do you personally know the value of everyone involved in this Bill? This could be the final straw from MANY straws that causes the highest skilled workers in NS to find better opportunities. 75,000 workers will have frozen wages for TWO years! These are not super wealthy people that can take that hit they are people like me saving for years for their larger purchases. People that are struggling to pay off student debt. The people we will be loosing are the people with the skill and experience to leave. Would you be happy to stick around knowing you will not get any more money to battle the raising cost of living for TWO years? Or would you look at that as reason to look around elsewhere?

Thanks for all you do!

Justin Woods

From: Sonya M. Hughes <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 12:29 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill C148

Dear Law Amendments Committee:

I am a Grade 8 and 9 teacher in the CCRSB, and I am respectfully asking that you listen to teachers when designing education policy and please stop trying to ram it down our throats. I am a great teacher, I am fun, respectful, kind, empathetic and hardworking. However, Government cutbacks have had a negative impact on my classroom (larger classroom sizes) and less time to plan, prep and mark, which means I am doing this into the evening, affecting my family life significantly.

Don't get me wrong, I love my job and I mean LOVE my job, but pushing Bill C148 through quickly without listening to teachers will not create the atmosphere of trust and respect you need to build rapport with teachers, to move forward without a lot of conflict and angry feelings. There must be some way in which we can deal with this in a way that everyone feels they have a voice, that they are heard! There must be a healthy way of communicating and interacting without causing us to be at odds. Doing this before the holidays when everyone is overwhelmed as it is, is just not showing us that you would like to deal fairly and listen to what we have to say.

Please consider my request and slow down this process so that we can breathe, take a step back and then come at it again in the New Year. It is Christmas after all, and if miracles can't happen at this time of year, then when can they?

Respectfully,

Sonya Hughes

[REDACTED]
Grade 8 & 9 ELA
Bible Hill Jr. High School
[REDACTED]

Subject line: Bill 148

Wednesday December 16th, 2015

Dear Chair of the Law Amendments Committee:

My name is Susan Durdle and I am writing to oppose Bill 148. I wanted to come in to speak, but I was informed that the list was full yesterday evening and this was the only time available since I am teaching.

Teaching has become an incredibly difficult job and the government's Bill 148 is going to worsen these conditions. Not only has the government stripped us of our constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, but this bill also impedes our ability to advocate for funding that would improve our students learning environments which are our working conditions.

I have classes of 30+ students where many speak little to no English, some have severe mental health conditions, and some read at a grade 2 level (I teach grade 11). I have no additional staff in my classroom to help me support these students and I feel like I am failing many of them because of this. How can one person possibly educate 30+ students with so many needs? The answer is, we can't. And there is no worse feeling than this, as I want to help all of my students succeed. I want to help all of my students reach their full potential. Instead, I effectively help about 50% of my students and fail to provide the support necessary for the other 50% to see their greatest success.

Then there is the curriculum. We continually change the curriculum, and the results are often far worse than they were before the changes. Active teachers need to be consulted when new curriculum is being developed. Having one or two former teachers consult on these projects is not enough.

And the biggest problem of all is time. Since I started teaching 11 years ago, I have had more demands on my time due to an increased need for reporting and paper work. Many people believe that our education system is failing our students, and yet instead of allowing teachers more time to plan for our extremely diverse groups of students, we are collecting data to prove we're either not doing well currently in some area, or making improvements in another area. What would improve student success is allowing teachers more time to plan for our students so that we are actually able to reach more than 50% of them.

I urge all Liberals to have the courage to vote against Bill 148, to show Nova Scotia's youth that you support them and their educators. I expect all members of the Conservative and NDP parties to vote against Bill 148 because it is wrong and it violates workers' rights.

The only way for this province to develop to its full potential is for our government to invest in its future, its people.

Sincerely,
Susan Durdle

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

December 16, 2015

Office of the Legislative Council
CIBC Building
Suite 802
1809 Barrington Street
P.O. Box 1116
Halifax NS B3J 2X1

Dear Law Amendments Committee:

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce is writing to express our support for Bill 148, the *Public Services Sustainability Act*.

We believe that this Act is necessary to ensure Nova Scotia's fiscal sustainability.

With 52 per cent of provincial spending on wages and benefits, ensuring that public sector wages rise at an affordable level is a critical part of putting our province on a sustainable fiscal footing. It is clear that public sector compensation has grown well above the private sector average, as well as above the rate of inflation and the rate of GDP growth, for many years now. Bill 148 will help restore some balance to public sector compensation in the context of Nova Scotia's economic and financial realities.

The government's most recent fiscal update shows that the province recently suffered a worrying drop in revenue and that the provincial deficit is now forecast to be above \$240 million. The passage of Bill 148 will help ensure that our province is able to achieve the sustainable public finances that are required to move Nova Scotia forward and create a positive business environment, as outlined in the Halifax Chamber's 2013-2018 strategic plan.

Sincerely,

Robert Batherson
Chair of the Board

December 16, 2015

BY EMAIL

Legc.office@novascotia.ca

Hon. Diana Whalen
Chair, Law Amendments Committee
Nova Scotia Legislature
c/o Legislative Counsel Office
P.O. Box 1116
Halifax NS B3J 2X1

Dear Ms. Whalen:

I am writing on behalf of the 31,000 members of the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union to convey our strong disagreement with the decision of the Law Amendments Committee on December 15, 2015. We are upset with your Committee's decision not to allow any presentations on Bill 148 after 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 16, 2015.

As you know, the Law Amendments Committee is an important part of the democratic process in the Legislature to allow for public input on a government bill before it is given Royal Assent and takes effect whether through proclamation or on receiving Royal Assent.

We have heard from many of our members who have contacted the Legislative Counsel Office, only to be told that presentations on Bill 148 would no longer be accepted. This is highly arbitrary and contrary to the whole intent and modus operandi of the Committee to allow any interested person or organization to appear before it.

Your government introduced Bill 148 on very short notice and without any advance consultation. You now seem intent on passing it as quickly as possible. The very least your Committee could do is allow anyone interested to appear before it. What difference will one, two or even, a few days make in the longer-run?

We strongly urge the Committee's reconsideration of its decision to restrict presentations on Bill 148.

Yours sincerely,



Jason MacLean

1st Vice-President, Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union

- c. Members of the Law Amendments Committee
Premier Stephen McNeil
Jamie Baillie, PC Leader and Leader of the Official Opposition
Maureen MacDonald, Interim NDP Leader

From: sehanifen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 3:18 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Cc: sehanifen@nstu.ca
Subject: Bill 148

Committee,

As a teacher, I could not attend today. As an NSTU member I want my voice heard loud and clear. Passing this bill will be not only undemocratic and unconstitutional (Section 2(d)) but will set the province back to the dark ages (Savage Days) in how public employees are viewed. As a teacher and former member of the union's executive, I have seen those teachers I represented in Halifax bashed over every item this liberal government could think of, from teacher certification to the Action Plan items; and even the weather (Snow Days). Teachers are fed up with all of this and are ready to revolt. If you pass this there will be no turning back to the harm you will do our profession and the morale (or lack of) each professional takes into the classroom. The fallout from either a work stoppage or a work to rule campaign will be the last resort you leave the union and its membership. This will demonstrate to the public just how much 9000 "workers" give day in and day out above and beyond their required job description. It will be felt in every community in this province and every MLA will have their office phones ringing off the hook from their constituents. Where exactly do any of you get off doing this and putting your own needs in front of the rights of others. Shame on you all.

As a taxpayer, I want to be able to obtain a service from a professional who feels valued in their job. This legislation spits in the face of that. You are taking away collective bargaining rights from these workers that would have given them the peace of mind to know that a FAIR and neutral third party arbitrator would address and decide on contract items that were at impasse. It is a process that mirrors the judicial system that has worked for years in society. You want to change that to the opposite and because you have a majority in the House treat it like a dictatorship. I have never seen a more two-faced group that say one thing one day and do the opposite the next. The proof is in how any of you MLA's including Mr. Jessome can say with a straight face that you appreciate and RESPECT the public sector, and yet put this Bill in place. Is Developing the Ability to Lie an intro course for MLA's?

Shawn Hanifen

From: dartmouthlocal <dartmouthlocal@nstu.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 3:27 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Cc: margaretmillermmla@bellaliant.net
Subject: Concerns regarding bill 148

To whom it may concern,

I may be a teacher and a union leader, but I am also a father and a husband. I care a lot about the future of our province, however, based on what I am seeing right now I am deeply concerned. The current Liberal government's introduction of bill 148 is just the latest in a series of moves that seem to target public sector employees in an attempt to strip us of our benefits and collective bargaining rights. It is a shameful abuse of power!

I know there has been a lot of chatter in the media, about how teachers were saying that it wasn't about the money when we rejected the recent tentative agreement. I believe there is a lot of truth to that, however, I do not think that means teachers should be happy with bill 148. While it's possible that some teachers would have been willing to accept a contract with a wage freeze, I think most teachers would like to believe that we could have traded this (through a fair bargaining process) for an improvement in working conditions, like class caps across all grades or increased marking and prep time. If this legislation goes through, then what bargaining power do teachers have? The two things the government wanted most will have been achieved already.

Back in 2013, when Stephen MacNeil was running for Premier, I decided to print out a hard copy of his election platform. Under the heading "EDUCATION", one of the first lines says, "Education isn't a line in a budget, it's our future". Well this certainly doesn't seem to be the tune that Mr. MacNeil is playing now. He is adamant that education costs are essentially frozen and there is no money for improvements. Teachers in this province are frustrated by this and they have had enough. I hope and pray that bill 148 is defeated for the sake of all public employees in this province.

Mark Savoury
Dartmouth Local President (NSTU)

Office: (902) 461-4187
Cellular: (902) 499-1452
Fax: (902) 468-7782
Email: dartmouthlocal@nstu.ca

www.dartmouthlocal.ca

The contents of this email are confidential.

LAW AMENDMENTS COMMITTEE

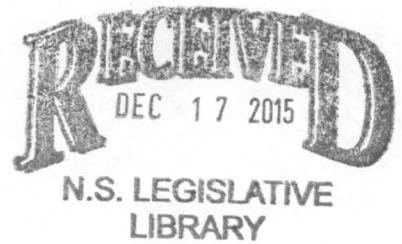
Red Room, Province House

Thursday, December 17, 2015

10:00 am

Robert Tupper respecting Bill #148 - Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act

DECLINED TO APPEAR





Nova Scotia Federation of Labour MEDIA RELEASE

December 17, 2015

Labour Federation Appalled at Liberal's treatment of deaf man

Halifax, N.S. - Nova Scotia Federation of Labour President Danny Cavanagh says that union leaders and members from across the province join all Nova Scotians in being dismayed, disgusted and appalled by the well-reported actions of Nova Scotia Liberal MLAs who voted to exclude a deaf Nova Scotian from presenting to the Legislature's Law Amendments Committee yesterday.

"We saw the Liberal MLA appointees to the Law Amendments Committee vote twice to not allow Robert Tupper, a deaf man who is directly affected by Bill 148, any ability to address the Law Amendments Committee through a sign language interpreter," says Cavanagh. "The incredible disrespect shown to Mr. Tupper by the Liberal MLA's on that Committee was shocking to everyone in the room, and it is unbelievable that politicians could act in such a discriminatory manner in this day and age."

Robert Tupper, a member of NSGEU Local 7, requires sign interpretation in order to communicate.

Tupper contacted the Law Amendments Committee on Tuesday afternoon through the Nova Scotia Legislature Clerk's office to be added to the list of presenters to the Committee, but was informed that no accommodation could be made to provide an interpreter.

NDP MLA Lenore Zann raised the issue of Tupper being denied accommodation twice at the Law Amendments Committee during the sittings on Tuesday afternoon and evening, but the Committee Chairperson could not be persuaded at that time to provide an interpreter.

After continued lobbying by the NDP to have Tupper's rights upheld, we were informed shortly after 2:00 pm by Liberal MLA Terry Farrell, the Chair of the Committee, that a sign language interpreter would be provided, and that Tupper would be allowed an opportunity to present if he arrived at the Committee by 4:50 pm when the Committee was scheduled to resume. Arrangements were made to contact Tupper immediately upon hearing this from the Chair, and Tupper appeared at the Legislature very shortly after 4:30 pm, well before the 4:50 pm deadline, only to be denied the right to present by two consecutive votes of the Liberal majority on the Committee.

"Our provincial legislature, as well as our entire province, should be welcoming spaces for Nova Scotians with disabilities, including hearing and vision impairments," says Cavanagh. "To blatantly discriminate against a deaf man by refusing accommodation initially and later not living up to an agreement to allow him to present once a sign interpreter was obtained sends a signal to all Nova Scotians with disabilities that this government feels that they are second-class citizens who do not share the same rights as others."

"Our union takes discrimination, human rights issues, and issues of overall fairness incredibly seriously," says NSGEU Acting President Jason MacLean, who is an Officer of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour. "Robert Tupper is a long-time and well-respected member of NSGEU, and we stand with our member against the disrespectful and unacceptable treatment he was given by the Liberal MLA's who form the majority at Law Amendments."

Late on Wednesday night, hours after he had left the Legislature, Robert Tupper was offered by the Liberal government an opportunity to speak to a "special hearing" of the Law Amendments Committee this morning at 10:00 am after the refusals to accommodate his need for sign language interpretation on Tuesday and the vote on Wednesday afternoon to cut debate short before the allotted time without allowing him to speak.

In a statement attached to this media release, Mr. Tupper indicates that he continues to feel disrespected and discriminated against by the Liberal MLA's and chooses not to subject himself to such continued treatment, and has now declined the 10:00 am "special hearing".

- 30 -

For more information or to arrange interviews contact: NSFL President Danny Cavanagh @ 902.957.0822 (cell) or Joan Wark @ 902.471.8104 (cell)

The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour is the provincial voice of the Labour Movement, representing 70,000 members in over 400 union locals.

Statement by Robert Tupper

For Release To Media: Statement On My Exclusion From Law Amendments **Thursday, December 17, 2015**

As a provincial government employee affected by Bill 148, I have attempted this week to appear in front of the Law Amendments Committee of the Legislature to present my concerns about the Bill.

My first attempt to appear before the Committee were frustrated immediately on Tuesday afternoon when I asked to be added to the list and to have sign language interpretation provided as I am deaf and require an interpreter to communicate with others. I was told that there was no ability to accommodate my requirement for interpretation services at the Legislature for Law Amendments.

I understand that NDP MLA Lenore Zann raised the issue of the refusal to accommodate me twice at the Law Amendments Committee, both on Tuesday afternoon and early on Tuesday evening, but that the Chair of the Committee still would not allow reasonable accommodation at that time.

After 2 pm on Wednesday, I was reached and notified that Terry Farrell, the Chair of the Committee, had reconsidered their decision and that sign language interpretation services would be provided, but that the Committee would only be meeting until 5:00 pm and I would need to be present before the Committee adjourned at 5:00 pm.

On very short notice, I made arrangements to arrive at the Legislature as soon as possible, and was at the Legislature by 4:30pm. However, I was delayed at that time by Legislature's security questioning me about my dog and additionally delayed briefly by the security screening required to enter the Legislature.

Despite these delays, I was in the hearing room by 4:35pm, well before the 4:50 pm deadline that I was given to arrive before the Committee adjourned.

Immediately upon entering, the sign language interpreter provided to me began to translate the proceedings, which I was surprised to find were about me and whether I would be given a right to present to the Committee.

The arguing and debating between MLAs continued for some time, well past their 5:00 pm deadline, and two votes were held in which the Liberal MLA's present voted to not allow me to make a presentation to the Committee, despite having been invited earlier in the afternoon to do so by Committee Chair Terry Farrell. Opposition MLA's, and especially NDP MLA Lenore Zann, argued that I should have a right to communicate with the Committee and be given my allotted few minutes to speak about my concerns about Bill 148, but the Liberals voted to deny me that right. This decision by the Liberal MLAs was a complete outrage and a violation of my basic rights. In the end, the Liberals wasted far more time in arguing about whether or not I would be allowed to present to the Committee than I could have possibly used in presenting to the Committee if I were allowed to do so.

The treatment of me by these Liberal MLA's is clearly discriminatory. I was discriminated against as a deaf person, as a Nova Scotian citizen and taxpayer, and as someone who required very reasonable accommodation in order to address the Committee.

I find my experience in attempting to present to the Committee strongly outrageous and incredibly troubling. No efforts were made to accommodate my need for interpretation services when I first requested to appear on Tuesday, and then very short notice was provided to me on Wednesday afternoon that this reasonable accommodation would be allowed and that I needed to appear before the Committee was scheduled to be finished at 4:50 pm, which I was able to do but was still denied the ability to present. And the Liberals voted twice to exclude me from presenting, taking a half hour to debate and vote again and again to refuse me the ability to address the Committee for less than ten minutes.

The message that this sends is that the Liberals have no respect for the deaf or the disability community in general. It was disrespectful and discriminatory. I was singled out as someone specifically not allowed to present, despite repeated attempts since Tuesday afternoon to be added to the list and to have reasonable accommodation provided.

This treatment compounds my concern about Bill 148.

I find it completely wrong to have this government bring Bill 148 into law without allowing Collective Bargaining processes to fully play out.

In the case of my union, NSGEU, there is a tentative agreement which was reached which we have not yet been able to vote on. To rush this Bill through before we have been able to conduct a

democratic vote, and in a period in which our union has been discussing and explaining the tentative agreement to all of our members, is also incredibly disrespectful, and also unnecessary.

The Premier and this government have not been bargaining in good faith when they negotiate one day towards a tentative agreement and are prepared to impose legislation the next.

Like others, I am opposed to a legislated wage freeze which is far below the rate of inflation, meaning that the buying power of our wages will decline each of the five years that this legislation will be in effect.

Rather than looking for opportunities to increase government revenue through bringing new business to Nova Scotia and increasing the number of jobs in the province, this government has chosen instead to attack public sector workers, our wages and our working conditions.

Bill 148 goes way to far, and way too fast. This government should be working in cooperation with unions in the province, bargain in good faith and do the right thing by conducting bargaining through negotiations, not legislation.

I believe that Bill 148 attacks union members unnecessarily and without cause.

And, in denying me the ability to present to the Law Amendments Committee, the Liberal MLA's on the Committee continued that attack, also unnecessarily and without cause.

I believe that I am owed an apology, both by Law Amendments Committee Chairperson Terry Farrell as well as from Premier Stephen McNeil as the leader of the Liberal caucus which acted in a discriminatory manner towards me as a deaf Nova Scotian.

I was told that I would have an opportunity to speak, with needed sign language interpretation, before the Committee adjourned at 4:50pm, but by 4:35pm the Liberal members of the Committee were already debating and voting on a motion that would shut down the Committee and exclude me from presenting.

I was disrespected, and my time was wasted.

Late last evening, I learned that Premier Stephen McNeil would allow a "special hearing" of the Law Amendments Committee today at 10:00am to allow me to speak to the Committee.

At first, I was pleased at this development. However, the Law Amendments Committee has already reported to the Legislature and completed its work. It is unclear to me what purpose this morning's 10 am "special hearing" would have if the Committee's report is concluded.

Very soon after receiving word that Premier McNeil would allow a 10:00 am "special hearing" at the Committee for me, and that he agrees that I should have been allowed to speak yesterday afternoon, I read several news reports quoting Law Amendments Committee Chair Terry Farrell as saying the reason I was denied the right to speak was because I "didn't follow proper protocol in making arrangements to appear" and that they were prepared to hear from me at 2pm today and that I was late.

These are both false statements.

I followed the only protocol available to be allowed to address the committee: I communicated on Tuesday afternoon that I would like to make a presentation and that I would require sign language interpretation services. These were denied.

Only a fight by opposition MLA's, and especially NDP MLA Lenore Zann, raised this to the level that reasonable accommodation was offered.

I was not invited to speak to the Committee at 2 pm. I was contacted after 2pm and told that Committee Chair Terry Farrell agreed that I could make a presentation if I was in the room prior to the Committee adjourning at 4:50pm.

Despite the short notice, and the need on my part to make arrangements in order to make my way to the Legislature with this little notice, I was more than 15 minutes early before the assigned adjournment time that I was provided.

Given that Liberal MLA and Law Amendments Chair Terry Farrell continues to defend discriminatory and disrespectful behavior by himself and his Liberal colleagues by telling untruths about me and continuing to disrespect me, and given that I still have not received an apology, either from him or from the Premier or any representative of government, I have no faith that the Liberal MLA's on the Committee will listen to any presentation that I might make at 10am.

Therefore I decline their invitation to present this morning at 10 am.

When I accepted their prior invitation yesterday, they subsequently and very soon after voted to deny me the right to speak through sign interpretation. This invitation for this morning seems just as hollow, if not more so. I am invited to appear in front of a Committee that has done its work already and reported back.

I will be reviewing options with respect to filing a complaint on this issue with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission and/or the Provincial Ombudsperson, and will be seeking legal counsel and legal advice to determine what next steps I may pursue on this blatant discrimination.

I cannot trust the Liberals any further, because they let me down badly yesterday. This behavior is disrespectful, it is discriminatory, and it is a continuation of a culture of bullying that this government has embraced. I believe that the Chair of the Committee should resign as MLAs, as should all Liberal MLA's involved.

I can be reached directly by email at r_j_tupper@hotmail.com

Robert Tupper
Member, NSGEU Local 7

From: Amy Graham <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 4:56 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Submission to the Law Amendments Committee Re: Bill 148
Attachments: Amy Graham Law Amendments Bill 148.pdf

Please see a written statement for the Law Amendments Committee (attached as a pdf) regarding Bill 148. Below is the text in case you have any issues opening the pdf.

Thanks,
Amy Graham

To the honourable members of the Law Amendments Committee:

I am a civil servant, working as a Career Counsellor for the NS Department of Community Services helping people in receipt of Income Assistance develop skills to become gainfully employed. I chose this career path for several reasons, the first of which was that I wanted to make a difference in people's lives. I wanted and still want to help build a better Nova Scotia by meeting people where they are and providing them with the means to achieve their dreams and goals. While I have watched family and friends move to other provinces for employment, I chose to stay here. Why? Because I love its beautiful land, sea, culture and its people. As any career counsellor knows, there are a number of factors one must consider in building a life when choosing a career, which I will get to in a moment.

In the social services field, the work can challenge us mentally and emotionally as we attempt to meet the needs of citizens who are under an enormous amount of stress and often experience health issues. Like a flight attendant tells passengers to put on their own oxygen mask first to be better equipped to help the person beside you, so too must we ensure we take care of our own mental, physical and financial health to better serve the public. This involves ensuring we have access to things like adequate medical coverage, the ability to set roots in the soil by having job security and being able to set up a financially *sustainable* future. These are all determinants of a sound career choice. If you can't have them here, one must find them elsewhere; otherwise our own sustainability is at risk.

The Civil Service Collective agreement (along with other public sector agreements) has protected these elements for decades. As a result, the public sector has attracted talented, intelligent workers and has been able to keep them here as contributing citizens and taxpayers in Nova Scotia. These elements were achieved through a well-established system of collective bargaining between unionized employees and the employer (previous governments), who have actively participated in the thoughtfully-developed steps in the **process**. The partnership involved compromise; discussion; give-and-take. Recently, the McNeil government has decided to unilaterally redefine this process, hastily creating a piece of legislation that will provide them with the **power** to usurp the fair arbitration component which normally enables an impartial third party to make an objective decision.

Like 75,000 other workers, I based my fiscal framework, my financial future, on a collective agreement established over time during bargaining negotiation that took place at the table. Because most previous

governments respected us enough as workers; no, as **people**, to have a two-way conversation. The bargaining table was not a place where one party dictated ultimatums to the other or who used intimidation tactics to coerce a deal. It had to be a place where both sides respected the process and were open to compromise. The ultimatums, the intimidation, the legislation are all examples of how the government has bargained in bad faith. Conciliation and arbitration are civil tools both sides have historically taken part in to resolve conflicting stances on the working conditions brought to the table. These tools are there because we, as civil servants, do not have the right to strike. Introducing legislation that interferes with these important steps in the process is, in my view, a direct violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Since the right to strike is not an option, there had to be a form of recourse in its place to ensure a fair collective bargaining process could occur, to avoid a situation where the employer (in this case, the provincial government) could usurp the process and unilaterally determine all working conditions.

It's the same reason clause 46 of the Civil Service Act states that a provision in the collective agreement prevails if in conflict with a legislated regulation: to ensure the government does not contravene the collective bargaining process to satisfy their own agenda. This is partly because the clauses in a collective agreement were the result of a functional bargaining process.

I would even assert that Bill 148 (The Public Service Sustainability Act) is in direct conflict with the Civil Service Act and Civil Service Collective Bargaining Act and the current collective agreement which remains in force until a new agreement has been ratified. Any regulations stipulated by legislation like in Bill 148, then, are in direct conflict with the current terms of the collective agreement. So taking all of this into account, the collective agreement, which still remains in force is paramount over any legislation. To pass a bill that violates the contract not only breaks the contract, but also violates a constitutional right to exercise collective bargaining. I am asking that Bill 148 be withdrawn and allow the collective bargaining process to take its natural course, involving good-faith discussion at the bargaining table, followed by conciliation and arbitration if both sides are unable to reach an agreement.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Amy Graham

Submission from the Council of Canadians to Law Amendments re: Bill 148, the Public Services Sustainability Act

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments, as I was unable to secure a time to present in person.

I make these comments on behalf of the Council of Canadians, Canada's leading citizens' organization since 1985, with over 100,000 supporters and 60 grassroots chapters across the country. We promote progressive policies on fair trade, clean water, energy security, public health care, democracy and other issues of social and economic concern to Canadians. The Council has five local chapters and approximately 1,000 supporters in Nova Scotia.

The Council of Canadians stands in solidarity with the labour movement in condemning Bill 148, which would force agreements on public sector workers. Collective bargaining is protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and this bill violates the spirit of the Charter and the Supreme Court of Canada's more recent ruling upholding this right.

How can Finance Minister Randy Delorey support both the long-term sustainability of Nova Scotia's public services, including respecting the collective bargaining process, while at the same time forcing non-negotiable five-year agreements with little to no wage increases?

The timing also seems rather convenient, coming on the heels of a fiscal update indicating that our small deficit doubled in three months, in order to continue with the austerity agenda to which this government is so committed. In a time when the economy is stalled, giving 75,000 public servants across the province less than cost of living increases will shrink our economy, since those families will be tightening belts and not spending.

The Council of Canadians asks this Committee to respect the will of the people and represent the views that have been expressed before you, which I'm told include over 40 people speaking against the bill and only two supportive of it in more than 12 hours of presentations: reject Bill 148.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Giles

Atlantic Regional Organizer | Organisatrice régionale, Région Atlantique

The Council of Canadians | Le Conseil des Canadiens

211-2099 Rue Gottingen Street | Halifax, N.S. | B3K 3B2

902.422.7811 | 1.877.772.7811

cell. 478.5727

www.canadians.org

From: Dorian Lang <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 8:42 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Funding for NS Teachers

Hello,

I'm writing as a Nova Scotia resident to state my opposition to the limitation of public servant wages, most specifically the limitations placed on teachers. Our teachers are a vital resource to the coming generations, and I very much value the collective bargaining process that teachers express through their union. I do not believe it is equitable and fair for teachers to be limited by legislation to a frozen wage.

I would urge the Nova Scotia government to listen to teachers when they vote against the limitation of their wage by legislation, and reopen discussion with teachers for a fair balance of wage.

I believe this is important to the health and vitality of the coming generations of Nova Scotians, and should not be finalized without arriving at a solution with Nova Scotian teachers.

Regards,
Dorian Lang