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**From:** Holly Didsbury [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 15, 2017 9:43 PM  
**To:** Office of the Legislative Counsel  
**Subject:** Bill 75

To The Law Amendment Committee,

I would like to submit the following to be read during the Legislation of Bill 75.

To The Nova Scotia Minister of Education and Nova Scotia Premier;

I am writing as a concerned parent with two children in the Public School system. I am disheartened about the way our teachers in this province are being treated. As an active member in my school community, I see the struggles teachers face every single day.

Some people are under the impression that teachers have this easy job; working from 8-3 with paid summers off. There is some truth to this myth. They are definitely there every day from 8-3. However, what people fail to acknowledge are the countless hours after 3:00 that are put in planning, assessing, coaching, tutoring, mentoring and the list goes on. How many other jobs do you know of where employees volunteer 3-4 hours a day after their paid hours? As for those paid summers off...teachers have a percentage of their wage held back throughout the school year to 'pay' them during those summer months. Nobody tells the public those details though.

Teachers are asking for less data input and more face to face with their students. What exactly does the province plan on doing with this data? Can data input really be justified as more important than instructional time?

Let's move on to those 'irrational requests' for more support these teachers keep asking for. Schools have become inclusive over the past couple of decades. All students are to be treated with equity and to feel a sense of belonging. I couldn't agree more with this movement. However, without the proper supports put in place, we are setting everyone (including the students requiring the extra supports) up for failure. Teachers and administrators should not have to beg for support staff. The amounts of behaviours in the classroom continue to increase yet the support staff continue to decrease. How does this make sense?

The province expects teachers to cope with increasing class sizes, create/manage and implement IPP's and still carry on every day teaching. My daughters grade 1 class had 26 students in it last year. To summarize, 26 six-year-old children in ONE classroom for a teacher to manage. The teacher was a fabulous woman with many years of teaching under her belt and thankfully was able to survive the year. This goes against the supposed

'caps' in lower elementary classrooms. Not only was it unfair to the teacher, it was unfair to the students.

Our teachers are working with limited to no resources (and ¾ of the ones they do have they purchased out of pocket), minimal supports in the classroom to help manage the behaviours and non-existent budgets. Yet they still show up day after day with a smile on their face ready to teach our children.

The Nova Scotia government should be ashamed of themselves for degrading our teachers the way they have in running ads to capture the public's attention and trying to sway their views and opinions to now stripping them of their rights by imposing a contract on them. I find it ironic that the new Nova Scotia Teaching Standards #6 states that 'Teachers model and promote professionalism in teaching.' I ask you this...where is the governments professionalism in shaming our teachers through ad campaigns?

As a tax payer, I can confidently say that I would much rather see my tax dollars go back into schools through resources, support wages, teachers wages and school renovations far more than I would like to see them being spent on increased retirement plans for politicians or ad campaigns degrading teachers.

I challenge you to think about the future of our education system and most importantly the future of our children. Our schools and teachers are providing the foundation for our future nurses, doctors, lawyers, politicians, accountants, labourers and every other profession. Every occupation depends on an education.

Our teachers are the definition of resiliency. Stand behind them and support them as they fight for the future of our children. I challenge you, Ms. Casey to go back to your teaching days in the classroom and ask yourself how you would feel if you were a teacher in the school system you are creating? Now put your teacher shoes back on and support the teachers who are still there instead of turning your back on them in this time of need.

Regards,

Holly Didsbury