
From: Chandler, Keri [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2017 1:53 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Cc: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: I Oppose Bill 75

To the chair of the law amendments committee:

Re: Bill 75

I want to begin by saying that I am probably the least politically informed person I know, but even I know that legislating this bill on teachers goes against the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. I strongly oppose this bill based not just on this violation, but because we as parents, need to step up and scream for real changes- changes that teachers have been shouting about for years.

My own 3 children are directly affected by the increasing demands on teachers, overcrowded schools, lack of resources, lack of support teachers (Educational Psychologists, Speech Language Pathologists and Guidance counsellors) and data collection meant to skew numbers to show growth/improvement instead of to target the support needed for struggling kids.

Simply put, there are not enough support people in our schools and agreeing to put 20million dollars into a committee to look at the problem AGAIN, is not a effective use of my tax paying money (in my opinion). There have been many committees and many reports, but what is being DONE? What is being accomplished?

For those of you who have a child doing well in school (academically and socially) then you probably wouldn't think there are many problems with our education system. I know this, because I have two children who have been sailing easily through with no problems and we are pleased with their educational gains. Then, along came my third child who has struggled both academically and socially throughout his first three years in school and it has been challenge after challenge for him, for his teachers and for us, his parents! Just writing those words makes me tear up because I feel that I am failing him as a mother because I am not usually one to cause problems. I didn't cause problems when he didn't get chosen to have speech therapy (because our school is too overcrowded) and I have to pay for weekly private sessions. I didn't cause problems when he was "too high" for extra support in grade one, but "too low" for extra support in grade two. Too low for support??? How is that even justified? It is justified because they changed the qualifications needed for extra support so that the DATA is more positive and shows improvement. That's how our government and our Department of Education shows growth!!!

All of these reasons make it clear that this time, I need to cause problems... I can no longer let this system continue to fail my son. I think the education system is failing him, but this time, his mother is stepping up. I am imploring you to re-think this bill and I'm asking that all Liberal MLAs vote with their consciences and their constituents in mind, while showing respect for the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. I already know that the Progressive Conservative, NDP and Independent MLAs support us in this fight and I will certainly remember that at election time. Please rethink the ramifications of imposing this unconstitutional bill. It will not address the concerns I've mentioned above and I believe it will actually make matters worse because teachers already feel so undervalued and unappreciated, that I'm afraid they will give up. Please do not force them to give up on my 3 sons! Their teachers have all been amazing through this ordeal, especially my youngest son's teacher. Without her loving, caring kindness, it would be a bigger fight getting him to school each day.

As a parent, I want to see immediate changes in our classrooms and I know this is possible through fair collective bargaining. Unfortunately, I have lost trust in the government (that I regrettably voted for) to bargain in good faith but I still ask that you please vote no to this bill. Return to the table to continue the conversation to ensure that teachers, parents and students are all heard and respected. Please hear the teachers when they say that they will not return to

"normal". Please do not use my children and all of the children in Nova Scotia as pawns in this political game. Go down in history as the government who began fixing education, not the government who ruined it.

Keri Chandler
Resident of Bedford NS
Mother of 3 amazing boys