



Canadian Association of University Teachers  
Association canadienne des professeurs et professeurs d'université

May 7, 2015

The Honourable Stephen McNeil, M.L.A.  
Premier of Nova Scotia  
One Government Place, 7th Floor  
1700 Granville Street  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2T3

Dear Premier:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Canadian Association of University Teachers with respect to Bill 100, the *Universities Accountability and Sustainability Act*, legislation that passed 3rd and final reading in the Nova Scotia Legislature on May 5 despite widespread opposition to the Bill from faculty, staff, and students.

At the annual Spring Council meeting of CAUT held last weekend, delegates from academic staff associations across the country unanimously passed a motion condemning the legislation as a violation of constitutionally protected rights, university autonomy, and academic freedom. The motion also authorized CAUT to commence censure proceedings against any university in the province that attempts to trigger the provisions of the legislation by submitting a "revitalization plan" with the government.

Censure is a rarely used sanction that is applied only in cases where a university administration acts in a manner that threatens academic freedom and tenure, undermines collegial governance, disregards negotiated agreements, refuses to bargain in good faith, or takes other actions that are contrary to interests of academic staff or compromise the quality and integrity of post-secondary education. Censure means CAUT will publicize the offending actions of an administration nationally and internationally, and call on the academic community not to accept appointments, speaking engagements, or honorary degrees at the censured institution. Censure does great harm to the reputation of an institution, which is why it is used judiciously and only in serious cases where the rights of academic staff are breached.

CAUT delegates elected to pursue this course of action because of the serious potential for violations of fundamental employment and academic rights in the Bill. While the Bill was passed with some amendments, the legislation still takes away the right to strike and grants government unprecedented powers to direct and determine research and instructional priorities.

The freedom to pursue and disseminate knowledge is essential for the common good of society and for robust democracies. Academic freedom and autonomy from governments and other outside pressures are the cornerstone of all great universities. Your government, by enacting Bill 100, is threatening to undermine these fundamental values that lie at the heart of the mission of higher education. In doing so, you have seriously jeopardized the

reputation and standing of universities in Nova Scotia. I sincerely hope that your government will reconsider this flawed and ill-advised piece of legislation.

Yours sincerely,



David Robinson  
Executive Director

cc: Dany Sheehy, President, Association des professeurs, professeures et bibliothécaires de l'Université Sainte-Anne  
Chris Rice, President, University of King's College Teacher's Association  
David Mensink, President, Dalhousie Faculty Association  
Rachel Brickner, President, Acadia University Faculty Association  
Linda Mann, President, Mount Saint Vincent University Faculty Association  
Brad Long, President, St. Francis Xavier Association of University Teachers  
David Deane, President, Atlantic School of Theology Faculty Association  
Alvin Comiter, President, Faculty Union of Nova Scotia College of Art & Design  
Marc Lamoureux, President, Saint Mary's University Faculty Union;  
President, Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers  
Steve Cloutier, President CUPE 3912  
Robin Vose, President, CAUT  
Peter McInnis, Chair, Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee, CAUT