



ETFO, OSSTF/FEESO file unfair labour practice complaints against Liberal Government

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Toronto, ON – The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) are filing unfair labour practice complaints with the Ontario Labour Relations Board against the Government of Ontario. The complaints detail how the Government discriminated against OSSTF/FEESO and ETFO members when it:

- made payouts worth tens of millions of dollars to unions and employee bargaining agencies that did not challenge and, in fact, cooperated in the Liberals' agenda to strip education sector workers' collective agreements during the 2012 round of education sector bargaining under Bill 115;
- engaged in coercion and reprisals, and discriminated against ETFO and OSSTF/FEESO members because their unions successfully challenged the violation of their members' constitutionally protected rights under Bill 115; and
- bargained in bad faith during 2014 education sector negotiations by consistently representing that all four of Ontario's teacher unions would be receiving substantially identical financial settlements for their 2014-2017 collective agreements.

The Government's conduct only recently came to light when it confirmed that two of four teacher unions, as well as other employee bargaining agencies, will be receiving financial settlements from the province totalling tens of millions of dollars, essentially for their non-participation in the Bill 115 *Charter* challenge.

ETFO President Sam Hammond:

"ETFO's unfair labour practice complaint makes the case that these recent payouts are, essentially, very expensive thank you cards from the Liberal government to unions that agreed to major financial concessions during 2012 and gave public legitimacy to a law, Bill 115, that the government used to impose those same concessions on others. At the same time, the government refuses to offer a fair settlement to the members of ETFO, a union that challenged Bill 115 at every turn and sought to protect its members' *Charter* rights in court."

"The Government says its recent payouts are a safeguard against future constitutional challenges, but that story is a smoke-screen that evaporates under scrutiny. These financial deals, and the fiction spun to justify them, prove yet again how ethically challenged this Liberal government really is.

"In its complaint, ETFO is asking the OLRB to make the government produce all documents related to the payouts in question. We intend to shine a light on the unprincipled actions taken by the Liberals in advance of a provincial election."

OSSTF/FEESO President Harvey Bischof:

"Bargaining is often a contentious and rough and tumble process, but both parties have to leave the table with their integrity intact for a deal to really be a deal. OSSTF/FEESO left the last round of central bargaining with our integrity intact. The government did not."

“Government negotiators insisted that no settlement was possible unless OSSTF/FEESO abandoned grievances for the recovery of lost pay due to frozen grid movement in the 2014-15 school year. Yet, somehow, after a round of bargaining in which the government insisted on identical financial outcomes for all unions, OECTA’s grid-delay grievances were explicitly allowed to live on. That’s both unfair and dishonest, and that’s why we’re filing this complaint.”

“We undertook and won a pivotal court challenge because our members’ Charter rights had been violated by Bill 115. We are at a loss to understand why the government now feels an obligation to square up with unions that willingly signed onto an agreement, and whose members’ rights were not affected by that legislation. But that won’t stop us from pursuing justice.”

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