

**Bill 100 – Labour Board Act**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak briefly to the proposed Bill.

As we understand it, the purpose of the Bill is to improve labour relations by merging six existing labour boards and streamlining the process for handling labour disputes. We applaud this effort. There are, however, two elements of the Bill which on the surface at least, appear to go beyond this goal. We are concerned they will have potentially widespread implications for private businesses in Nova Scotia. One has to do with how a proposed Labour-Management Committee would be structured. The other is a provision for successor rights.

We respectfully request that the Law Amendments Committee require more public consultation to insure that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of how these elements of the Bill could negatively affect businesses in the Province and whether amendments to the Bill should be considered in light of these consultations.

Bill 100, as introduced, proposes to establish a Labour-Management Review Committee. Its purpose is to improve labour relations and collective bargaining in the Province. Members of the proposed Committee would be comprised of equal numbers of unionized labour representatives and representatives from unionized employer companies. Bill 100 would replace the Tribunal formerly available under the Labour Standards Code. Does this mean that non-union shops will no longer have a voice in settling labour disputes? Language used in this section of Bill 100 speaks of a Labour / Management Review Committee. Is this intended to confuse people into believing that non-union interests are represented by the proposed Committee? We believe that non-union interests must be represented on any such committee.

The media has reported within the past week that Bill 100 will insure succession rights to employees of government agencies if work previously carried out by them is outsourced via contracts or is privatized. Bill 100, as introduced, does not speak to this requirement. However, Hansard 10-49 of Tuesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> quotes the Honourable Minister of Labour and Workforce Development as saying that this is indeed the case. The way this element of the Bill was introduced raises a question of whether Bill 100 is purposely vague to mask an intention to force private companies to unionize in order to carry out work on government contracts. If mandatory certification is the purpose of the proposed succession rights, does this not violate the rights of employees of private companies to choose whether they want to belong to a union and does it not also force private companies into certification in order to qualify for work done for government agencies? We suspect that either or both may be the case and submit that neither is acceptable. It sends a strong message that business in Nova Scotia is only open to unionized shops. We recommend that succession rights in this context be deleted from Bill 100.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Cyr  
General Manager.