

Good Evening,

My name is Lee Sawyer and my son Ryan was a homicide victim in downtown Halifax on December 24th, 2022.

I am here today to speak to Bill 21-Clause 10, as it relates to the impact of The Security and Investigative Services Act, otherwise known as SISA. SISA is a law that in 2010 passed all three readings and received royal assent, yet was never proclaimed. Under SISA security and bouncers at bars in the province of Nova Scotia would have

a) To be trained b) to provide a criminal background check and c) to be licenced, among other requirements.

However, Clause 10-establishes a process for unproclaimed legislation to be AUTOMATICALLY repealed 10 years after Royal Assent, unless the House of Assembly resolves that it not be repealed or the Governor and council orders that the repeal occur on a later date.

The current process for repeal requires debate in the house explaining the decision for repeal.

SISA SHOULD NOT AND CANNOT fall victim to repeal under this clause. PEOPLE'S LIVES ARE AT STAKE!!

BILL 21- Clause 10 seems like a calculated act of a government, not willing to amend an existing law nor repeal it, and has yet to provide any indication of a brand new law that would exist in the spirit of SISA. NOONE from the government wants to be publicly on record for repealing a legislation, that by doing so, could have tragic and devastating consequences. This provides the government their excuse. The awareness of the need for the law is obvious, but the lack of accountability and transparency by the government to justify the WHY to not proclaim it, remains unanswered. This too is cause for concern. The government continues to sweep it under the carpet, when in fact real problems still exist.

I can't help but wonder that if it had been a child, nephew or grandson of a member of the government, how urgent the call to action would be and legislation proclaimed.

An amendment introduced on July 1st 2023 to the Liquor Control Act to licenced Cabarets (late night bars allowed to open till 3:30 A.M. and who's main purpose is to serve alcohol), now have requirements where security and bouncers are required to provide a criminal background check, as well as other requirements. While it only applies to the cabaret business, of which there are now only three in the province, the lounges in the province DO NOT require these. Therefore an individual who applies at a cabaret and is denied because of a criminal background, can in fact work at any of the other lounges in the province because it is NOT a requirement for employment and there is NO legislation in place to mandate it.

I'm not sure how the public is suppose to have the confidence of safety, with this knowledge nor should the government expect them to.

The question I ask the Premier and members of government, 'Is Nova Scotia that special from other provinces in Canada, like B.C.(2008), Alberta (2010) Ontario (2010) and Quebec (2006) who all have legislation regarding bouncers and security staff? Those provinces have had them implemented for years, yet here Nova Scotia sits, 15 years of debate and still no legislation. Talk about a lack of accountability!! I cannot help but wonder what bigger issue is at play in our province.

Premier Houston needs to be reminded that we are his customer and the government is here to serve and protect the best interests of the people of Nova Scotia, the people that elected him and the legislature into power!!

The Giffin family of Nova Scotia has asked the same questions of our Government after the death of Stephen Giffin in 1999. It was the unwavering efforts of a father determined to not allow this to happen to yet another family, that SISA came to be. Mr. Giffin went to his grave with what he thought was a new proclaimed legislation and rested with the knowledge that he did good for Stephen and his son would be proud. Can you imagine the horror he would feel today?

So I stand here before you to ask you to put yourself in my shoes and the shoes of Mr. Giffin. Every moment I have to spend on this issue, is yet one more stake in my heart. My commitment is to ensure that this DOES NOT HAPPEN YET AGAIN. While I pray that it will benefit someone else, it has ZERO benefit for my son, he sits in an urn on my fireplace mantel.