W.R.D.S.B. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS ASSOCIATION

eUpdate

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The Educational Assistants Association in Waterloo Region along with over 40 Ontario unions takes next steps in lawsuit against Ford government's wage restraint legislation

(Toronto, ON) – A Coalition of over 40 Ontario unions has formally filed evidence in a lawsuit to repeal legislation which severely limits wage and benefit increases for public sector workers, a move the Coalition says violates bargaining rights enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"We have always believed that the Ford government's attack on collective bargaining is a serious interference with the constitutionally-protected right to collective bargaining, which has repeatedly been affirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada", said Patty Coates, President of the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL), "the COVID-19 pandemic has further demonstrated the outrageousness of Ford's attack on public sector workers who have been relied upon to combat this crisis."

The Coalition, representing approximately 270,000 employees, has taken the significant step of a lawsuit due to the detrimental impact of Bill 124 on those employed in the broader public sector. The recently filed 14 volume, 4,500-pages of evidence outlines these impacts.

A Manitoba court recently found that similar restrictions on collective bargaining in Manitoba violate the Charter, describing that legislation as a 'draconian measure that inhibited and dramatically reduced' the collective bargaining rights of unionized public sector workers. "The decision in Manitoba affirms our position that unconstitutional legislation such as Bill 124 must be struck down by the Courts," said the Coalition's lead counsel, Steven Barrett, managing partner of Goldblatt Partners.

Dates have not yet been set for the Ontario government to file its responding evidence, and it is hoped that the case will be argued in court before the end of this year.

To arrange interviews or for more information, please contact Colleen Dietrich Sisson - President Educational Assistants Association @ colleenpresidenteaa@gmail.com

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