



Karen Hughes
Deputy Minister, Treasury Board Secretariat
Secretary of Treasury Board and Management Board of Cabinet
PSconsultation@ontario.ca

May 23, 2019

Subject: Ontario Public Sector Consultations

Dear Ms. Hughes,

The Association of Professors of the University of Ottawa (APUO) is providing, by way of this letter, a written response on the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) consultations on collective bargaining in the public sector. The four questions sent to public sector employers and bargaining agents and the measures listed for consideration in your news release announcing this consultation reveal your intention to undermine the right of our members to free and fair collective bargaining with our employer, the Board of Governors of the University of Ottawa. Government intrusion in our bargaining process is neither necessary nor welcome.

The University of Ottawa operates in a unique context that only its bargaining agents and the Board of Governors can fully grasp. As a bilingual institution with the mandate to serve the Franco-Ontarian community, our French programs often compete with similar programs offered in Québec for a third of the cost. As such, the workload of our members includes unique elements not shared by other college and university faculty and librarians in the province (with the exception of Laurentian University). Our workload duties include the translation of material for courses and the delivery of all programs and activities that create opportunities for our students in both official languages. This official mandate is just one of the reasons that the University of Ottawa stands out. Indeed, located in our nation's capital, we are the largest English-French university in the world. Our ability to independently bargain fair collective agreements that considers this particular reality is crucial to attracting the best professors and librarians, and to fulfilling our mandate. Given the distinctive character of our University, your proposal to create a "one-size fits all" framework for collective bargaining practices is unwelcome and short-sighted.

In addition, the proposal to legislate wage increase caps undermines the joint efforts that we have made in bargaining to improve equity. As a result of our last round of collective bargaining, the APUO and its employer have established a joint-committee mandated with investigating existing gender salary differentials and with exploring possible remedies to redress this historical injustice. This is an important step for women-identified faculty and librarians at the University of Ottawa and only one example of a positive outcome that stems from our relationship with our employer. Any interference by the government in our collective bargaining process would compromise our ability to correct a long-standing and systemic inequity that continues to plague Ontario colleges and universities, and the public sector as a whole.

Since 1976, the APUO has successfully ratified sixteen Collective Agreements with our employer. This has been the result of a mutual desire by both parties to provide fair working conditions in an environment that delivers, high-quality research and education for our students. We therefore ask that the government respect our autonomy and academic freedom, and refrain from interfering in the ongoing relationship we strive to maintain with our employer.

Our faculty association fully endorses OCUFA's submission, which we've attached for your reference. We challenge the notion that public sector wage increases negotiated through collective bargaining are to blame for Ontario's deficit. Rather than attacking public sector workers, we urge the government to address its revenue problem and fund its public infrastructure adequately. As stated previously in this letter, APUO members, along with our peers across the province will in no way support any interference by the government in our right to fair and free collective bargaining. The APUO will defend this right by the necessary means.

Sincerely,

The APUO Executive Committee