

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Union coalition takes action in notwithstanding clause lawsuit

REGINA – Today, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL), and the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) announced their joint application to intervene in the Court of Appeal case concerning Bill 137: *The Education Amendment Act, 2023*. The parties' interest in the appeal responds to the provincial government's application of the notwithstanding clause.

In October 2023, Bill 137 was introduced, debated, and passed into law in a matter of days, preemptively invoking the notwithstanding clause. Not only does this insulate the Bill from being struck down by the courts, the three parties are concerned that the legislation:

- Inflicts harm on youth.
- Compels teachers and education workers to inflict said harm.
- Sets a precedent to override workers' Charter rights into the future.

The Court of Appeal will determine intervenors for this appeal later this month. The appeal is scheduled to be heard September 23, 2024.

"I wish I didn't have to say this, but CUPE has filed to intervene in the Court of Appeal case regarding Bill 137 — to help protect the Charter rights of Saskatchewan children and workers. It shouldn't have to come to this, but unfortunately here we are."

- Kent Peterson, CUPE Saskatchewan President

"We feel that suspending Charter rights – regardless of the sector of workers or subset of children – needs to be considered in the court of law. Students and workers alike deserve to know how this law could impact them now and into the future."

- Lori Johb, SFL President

"We support the advocacy of the Canadian Teachers' Federation on an issue that deeply affects our profession. Saskatchewan teachers are committed to ensuring safe and welcoming learning environments. Teachers must be able to exercise professional judgement and autonomy in supporting students and working with parents to help youth appropriately navigate challenges in their lives."

- Samatha Becotte, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF) President

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