

April 21, 2021

The Honourable Ross Romano
Minister of Colleges and Universities
438 University Avenue, 5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1N3

Dear Minister:

I have serious concerns with the *Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) University Act, 2021*, specifically, its excessive reliance on regulation.

Universities must be able to function as autonomous institutions, not subject to arbitrary external change, notably, by regulation. As part of that, they must have the ability to govern properly. The *Algoma University Act, 2008* spells out the appropriate details, including the composition and powers of the Board of Governors and Senate, leaving it up to the university bylaws for further details. I request that the *NOSM University Act, 2021* be structured in the same way, rather than leave details of governance up to regulation.

I am also very concerned about the bill's lack of provisions for successor rights for OPSEU/SEFPO Local 677's two bargaining units at NOSM. We want to ensure the new entity is bound by the same contracts and commitments the old entity was. The bill relegates successor rights to regulation at subparagraph 17(1)(h)(iv), meaning they may be decided without debate in the legislature. In contrast, the *Algoma University Act, 2008* clarifies successor rights at section 37, rather than leaving the matter to regulation.

I ask that the government ensure the local's successor rights and all contracts and commitments are maintained, either by writing them into the bill, or by eliminating the language from the bill so that *Ontario Labour Relations Act* provisions automatically apply.

I would be more than happy to speak with you about this matter, which is of the highest importance to me and my members in OPSEU/SEFPO's Universities Sector. Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Warren Thomas".

Warren (Smokey) Thomas
President, Ontario Public Service Employees Union

c: The Honourable Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development
Laura Mae Lindo, MPP, Opposition Critic for Colleges and Universities
Kathleen Wynne, MPP, Ontario Liberal Party Critic for Colleges and Universities
Brian Ross, president, OPSEU/SEFPO Local 677