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ATTENTION: Hon. Rajan Sawhney,

Dear Rajan:

Re: PBCO Interference in Post-Secondary Bargaining

We appreciate the opportunity to address you today. We are proud Alberta Post-Secondary workers and are frustrated by the current tactics being employed by the United Conservative Government to undermine what should be fair, open, and transparent collective bargaining. It's appalling that since 2018 post-secondary salaries have increased by 3.17%, and inflations has increased by 18.60%. Clearly worker wages have significantly lagged behind what is financially necessary for survival in this province.

In response to government interference in post-secondary bargaining, my colleagues have circulated a petition to remove PBCO from the collective bargaining process and have collected 3616 signatures from Albertans who share our concerns. In addition to submitting this petition to the Legislature today, we also wish to highlight what we see as some of the biggest barriers to successful negotiations:

- 1. Since post-secondary education in Alberta is partially funded by public dollars, why is it that the Government, via PBCO, is ONLY tasked with oversight of the lowest paid workers within each institution.
- 2. We would appreciate an explanation as to why it is that the Government, who currently only contributes approximately 35% of overall funding to each post-secondary institution, is permitted to exercise 100% control over bargaining unit wages.
- 3. A disturbing new trend in post-secondary education is the need for workers to now obtain multiple jobs to cover the rising cost of living. Many post-secondary workers in Alberta's 2 largest cities, where the cost of living is the highest, make wages below the government established poverty line. This not only creates a work environment of anxiety, but also contributes to a steady decline in the overall mental health of workers.
- 4. It is very disparaging to consistently hear members of the UCP government single out 'public sector workers' as being a greedy segment of the Alberta population. 'Public Sector

Workers' are contributing members of society, and have a significant economic impact on the overall state of the Alberta economy.

- 5. PBCO's interference in bargaining hampers employers' ability to engage in transparent negotiations, increases the amount of red tape that must be contended with, and significantly hampers a successful outcome to collective agreement bargaining.
- 6. Post-Secondary workers have been told to 'do more with less,' for far too long, and the ability to anything is impossible at this point. An investment in post-secondary workers is an investment in the Alberta Economy.

Once again, thank you for hearing our concerns. It is an honour to work within our province's post-secondary system, and we hope that our government would recognize the value we bring to all Albertans.

In solidarity,

Curtis Jackson, Vice President, Alberta Union of Provincial Employees

On behalf of:

Brittany Gold, Medicine Hat College

Drena Dechant, Bow Valley College

Jason Kirbyson, University of Lethbridge

Lauren Payne, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology

Kristy Duffy, NorQuest College

Louise Zielke, NorQuest College

Randy Butler, Red Deer Polytechnique

Paulette Harrison, University of Calgary