



8 August 2022

The Honourable Bloyce Thompson
Minister
Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture
Prince Edward Island

Re: Request Appointment of Conciliation Officer

Dear Minister Thompson,

Interim UPEI President Greg Keefe has provided us with a letter (Aug. 5) indicating that he opposes our request for you to appoint a conciliator to help us reach an agreement in collective bargaining (*PEI Labour Act*, s. 25). In our view, the employer's letter reinforces our position that the parties have reached an impasse and that it is appropriate at this juncture to work with a neutral third-party.

Although Dr. Keefe mentions two upcoming bargaining dates, he failed to mention the twenty (20) bargaining meetings we have had with the employer's negotiations team over the last three months or the fact that during that time there has been little progress in working towards concluding an agreement. Indeed, if our recent bargaining meetings are any indication, the prospects for concluding a collective agreement through direct negotiations are becoming increasingly dim.

In addition, the UPEIFA Bargaining Team has thoroughly explained our proposals and provided the employer with every opportunity to ask questions, invite subject matter experts to discuss relevant issues, and provide counter proposals. Unfortunately, the employer has for the most part rejected our proposals, failed to respond to our proposals, or failed to provide us with substantive responses to our proposals.

Finally, we must admit to being puzzled by Dr. Keefe's resistance to having a conciliator work with the parties to conclude a collective agreement. The appointment of a conciliator does not prevent either party from submitting and/or reviewing proposals. In our view, the assistance of a skilled conciliation officer can only be beneficial for assisting the parties in reaching an agreement.

For these reasons, we reiterate our request for you to appoint a conciliator to endeavour to bring about agreement between the parties.

Sincerely,



Dr. Michael Arfken
President
UPEI Faculty Association

cc:

Ms. Erin McGrath-Gaudet, Deputy Minister, PEI
Mr. Pat Sinnott, Chair, Board of Governors, UPEI
Dr. Greg Keefe, Interim President, UPEI
Dr. Andrew Trivett, Chief Negotiator, UPEIFA
Mr. Brian Johnston, Chief Negotiator, UPEI