

Dear Mr. Barber,

I am a second year law student at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law. I have worked at legal clinics and am passionate about access to justice.

Last year, I worked at Industrial Accident Victims Group. I witnessed the impact of legal aid cuts first hand. Staff hours were severely cut and we were not able to be supervised as well as years before. The clinic was unable to take on new client. We could not come in on Fridays. In short, the clinic's important work had suffered, denying access to justice to thousands of low-income Ontarians.

The legal clinic system in Ontario is important to me and to my community. Please listen to the clinics who are calling on the Standing Committee on Justice Policy to protect this system by improving the text of Bill 161.

Bill 161 must be changed so that the Legal Aid Services Act maintains its identification of legal clinics as the foundation for the provision clinic law services. Legal clinics must have the same Ontario-wide accessibility and clear definition and purpose that they do today. Legal clinics must be governed by the communities they serve and must not be impeded in providing access to justice for low-income and marginalized people.

Sincerely,

Paniz Khosroshahy

Parkdale-High Park