

Dangwal, Shriya

From: Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Sent: June 12, 2020 4:12 PM
To: Standing Committee on Justice Policy
Cc: Ellis, Victoria
Subject: Webform submission: Submission of material 18621

Submitted on Fri, 06/12/2020 - 16:05

Application ID: 18621

Submitted values are:

Bill or item of business: **Bill 161, Smarter and Stronger Justice Act, 2020**

Choose a topic

Do you know the bill title or business (e.g., pre-budget consultations) you'd like to speak or submit material about?

Yes

Choose an application

Which application would you like to submit?

Submit material only

Which deadline would you like to submit your written material for?

[Written Submissions \(Deadline: Friday, June 12, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.\)](#)

Add your information

Are you submitting material as an individual or on behalf of an organization?

I am submitting material as an individual

Name

Maura McDowell

Email address

maura.mcdowell@mail.utoronto.ca

Paste submission

Mr. Barber,

The legal clinic system in Ontario is essential to Ontarians. It is important to the community and to access to justice. I am writing to you to ask that you 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.

As have many others, I ask that the following changes be made to the draft bill:

1. Reinstate “access to justice” for low-income and disadvantaged communities to the Purpose of the legislation.
2. Community legal clinics must be recognized as the foundation for the provision of clinic law services.
3. Reinstate obligations to provide legal aid services across Ontario.
4. Define community legal clinics as: “community legal clinic” means a community legal organization structured as an independent corporation without share capital:
 - (a) whose board of directors are members of the community or communities served, or who have a substantial association or interest in the community or communities served;
 - (b) that provides legal aid services for the community it serves on a basis other than fee for service; and,
 - (c) that determines the legal needs of the individuals and communities served by the community legal clinic.

Sincerely,
Maura McDowell