



February 3, 2022

Mr. Taras Natyshak, MPP
Chair, Standing Committee on Public Accounts
99 Wellesley Street West
Room 1405, Whitney Block
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

Dear Mr. Chair, 

As the Standing Committee of Public Accounts ("Committee") knows, I issued warrants ("Warrants") to Dr. Robert Haché (President of Laurentian University) and Mr. Claude Lacroix (then-Chair of the Board of Governor of Laurentian University) on December 9, 2021. The Warrants compel the production of documents requested by the Committee in its report to the House dated December 8, 2021. A few days later, Laurentian University ("Laurentian") brought a motion before the Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Justice seeking to stay the Warrants pending a full hearing on constitutional questions raised by Laurentian.

On January 26, 2022, the Court issued a ruling denying Laurentian's motion except for documents protected by the Court's sealing order and mediation order (the "judicial confidentiality orders"). The Court found that it was "an open question as to whether the Legislative Assembly can order production of information that is subject to restrictions imposed by a court order." The Court described the outstanding legal question as "fundamental" and that it "affects the relationship between the three independent branches of government."

On January 28, 2022, I referred Laurentian's correspondence containing their proposal to produce the documents to the Committee. I understand that the Committee met on January 30, 2022, to consider the correspondence and that Laurentian has produced a significant number of documents to the Committee.

As Speaker, I am the guardian of the Assembly's parliamentary privileges. These privileges are necessary for the Assembly to discharge our vital constitutional role. However, I am also aware that Laurentian is insolvent and that court proceedings are costly. Consequently, I am writing to inquire whether the Committee, in light of the documents that Laurentian has (and may continue to) disclose, remains of the view that the documents subject to the judicial confidentiality orders are necessary to complete its inquiry. The Committee's view will assist me in determining how to proceed on the outstanding constitutional question.

Regards,



Hon. Ted Arnott, MPP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario