

Bill 29

The Health Sector Bargaining Unit Review Act

May 8, 2017

Submission from:
**The Public
Service
Alliance of
Canada,
Prairie Region**

To:
**The Legislative
Assembly
of Manitoba
Standing
Committee on
Legislative
Affairs**



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The Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) represents more than 180,000 workers in every province and territory in Canada, including nearly 8,000 workers in Manitoba and over 500 workers at Deer Lodge Centre, the largest rehabilitation and long term care facility in Manitoba, focused on providing care to Canada's veterans

The PSAC opposes Bill 29 (*The Health Sector Bargaining Union Review Act*). It should go without saying that the priority of this government should be to ensure that our veterans receive the best possible care from employees who are focused on their needs and not on unnecessary bargaining union restructure.

Our members work day in and day out to ensure that residents of Deer Lodge Centre receive quality health care. They know the residents, they know the resident's families and they know the needs of both.

We have participated with the other health care unions to present an alternative to Bill 29 to government and have as of yet, received no feedback or response to our model.

We are committed to ensuring that the focus remains on the residents of Deer Lodge Centre and believe our alternative could be implemented quicker and with less disruption. It is clear in Bill 29 that the government's objective is to reduce the number of collective agreements. We believe our proposal achieves the government's objective while still ensuring that our members have the right to continue to be represented by the union they have chosen.

We have seen in other jurisdictions where representation votes are time consuming, costly and divisive. There is no need for this process to be conducted in Manitoba. While we do not agree that bargaining unit restructure is necessary to ensure quality patient care, we have participated with other health care unions in Manitoba to come to the table prepared to work with government.

We wholeheartedly agree with the Manitoba Federation of Labour that three principles should guide any bargaining reform efforts:

1. Protecting and improving patient care;
2. Supporting and respecting health care professionals in their demanding and challenging work; and
3. Respecting the democratic decisions already made by health care workers about their current union representation.

Bill 29 sets out the establishment of an Employer Bargaining Council. We believe that unions representing health care workers in Manitoba should have the same right. This would allow unions to continue to perform all the functions they currently do as a certified bargaining agent except for the collective bargaining process.

If the intention of government is really to reduce the number of collective agreements, our proposal meets that goal. As we await to hear feedback from Manitoba Health, we urge the government to halt Bill 29 and continue the discussion.

Our members are so very proud of the work they do every day. They not only provide health care to our veterans, they do so with respect. Any attempt to distract from that purpose does not honor the sacrifices of the residents.