

# Bill 33 The Advanced Education Administration Amendment Act

**April 13, 2021**



## **Bill 33: *The Advanced Education Administration Amendment Act***

The Manitoba Federation of Labour (MFL) is Manitoba's central labour body, representing the interests of more than 100,000 unionized workers in our province, and we're pleased to have a strong working relationship with Manitoba's student movement and faculty associations.

Strong post-secondary institutions and engaged students are vital to our province's future. I'm pleased that this government has listened to the Canadian Federation of Students – Manitoba (CFS-MB) and student unions and has committed to changing this bill to exclude fees set by student unions or associations.

We would appreciate if this willingness to change direction happened more often with this government, as there has been a tendency to forge ahead with decisions that stakeholders have advised against. I think specifically of this government's planned changes to *The Labour Relations Act* in Bill 16; changes that have been opposed in writing by both labour and employers.

By working with, instead of against, the people who will live with the decisions you make, government can create better rules and laws that meet the realities we face as a province. We appreciate that this government is acknowledging that at least one aspect of this bill requires revision.

However, this bill still provides for the undermining of the autonomy of post-secondary institutions by allowing the Minister to pick and choose tuition fees, and in effect pick and choose what programs will be resourced, and how. These decisions should be left up to post-secondary institutions and their governance structures.

We appreciate the opportunity to speak in support of Manitoba's post-secondary students and those who ensure a high quality of education for them. We encourage this government to better support our post-secondary institutions with needed funding while keeping tuition fees low for working families. Years of freezes and cuts to post-secondary funding are having extremely negative consequences for students and staff alike. We encourage the government to put post-secondary education at the heart of Manitoba's economic recovery strategy.