



July 9, 2021

## **Education unions file new Charter challenges to protect Ontarians' constitutional rights after Ford's attack on democracy**

TORONTO, ON—The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA), and Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) are individually filing Charter challenges against the Ford government to protect Ontarians' basic democratic rights. They issued the following statement today:

“By passing legislation that overrides an Ontario Superior Court decision, and using the notwithstanding clause for the first time in Ontario's history to do so, Premier Ford proved that he is willing to attack democracy by trampling on Ontarians' constitutional rights to protect his political future.

We believe in our justice system and in the legal avenues that are available to us. We will continue to stand against the Ford government's flagrant abuse of power to override the rights of the people of Ontario. We maintain that Bill 307, *Protecting Elections and Defending Democracy Act, 2021*—like Bill 254—violates Ontarians' rights under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and is therefore unconstitutional.

The Ford government's deliberate attempt to shield itself from legitimate criticism and accountability from voters in the lead-up to the election will fail. They will not escape the judgement of Ontarians in June 2022.

We are committed to protecting the people of Ontario and to continuing to hold this and future governments to account as we advocate for a publicly funded education system that is student-centred, equitable and responsibly funded.”

Barb Dobrowolski, President, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association  
Sam Hammond, President, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario  
Karen Littlewood, President, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation

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