



April 26th, 2026

The Honourable Doug Ford

Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park Toronto, ON
M7A 1A1

Re: Urgent Concerns Regarding Freedom of Information Amendments in Bill 97

Dear Premier Ford,

I am writing on behalf of CFUW Ontario Council, a provincial organization representing 48 clubs and over 4,600 members across Ontario. As a non-partisan organization committed to lifelong learning, the improvement of public policy, and the protection of systemic rights, we are deeply troubled by the transparency rollbacks contained within Bill 97.

We wish to express our serious concerns regarding the provisions that fundamentally alter the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA). By bypassing the standard committee process and public consultation, this legislation was passed without the rigorous debate a shift of this magnitude requires.

The implications of Bill 97 are profound:

Executive Shielding: By removing the records of the Premier's Office, Ministers, and their staff from the scope of FOI, the province is creating a permanent blind spot in public oversight. This effectively allows the highest levels of decision-making to operate without accountability.

Retroactive Nullification: Applying these exclusions retroactively to 1988 is an unprecedented move that voids active FOI requests and overrides existing court orders. This undermines the stability of our legal and administrative systems.

Evisceration of Oversight: Existing FOI legislation already contained robust protections for security and personal privacy. These new amendments go far beyond protection; they encourage the use of private communication channels to circumvent public scrutiny.

Democracy thrives only in the light. Access to information is a right essential for tracing the reasoning behind provincial actions, from healthcare policy to environmental stewardship.

Premier Ford, we urge your government to withdraw the Freedom of Information sections of this Bill. By shielding ministerial records and backdating these exclusions, this legislation creates a

permanent deficit in public accountability and fundamentally abridges the rights of all Ontarians to hold their leaders to account.

Sincerely,

Sandra Shaw

Sandra Shaw
President, CFUW Ontario Council

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