

# news



3106 Joseph Howe Drive  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 4L7  
www.nstu.ca • pr@nstu.ca  
Tel 902.477.5621  
Fax 902.477.3517

N O V A S C O T I A T E A C H E R S U N I O N

---

**Date:** Dec 15, 2022    **For Release:** Immediately    **Contact:** Mark Laventure

---

## **Teachers Dissatisfied by Governments Refusal to Remedy Illegal Contract**

(Halifax-Kjipuktuk, NS) NSTU President Ryan Lutes is concerned the province is backing away from its public commitment to seek a remedy for Bill 75, which was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia in June.

Lutes says that recent communication with the Minister of Finance indicates a reluctance to right the wrong that was caused by Bill 75. He is hopeful that Premier Houston can bring clarity to the situation by reaffirming his commitment to finding a remedy for what the courts have labelled “vindictive” legislation.

“There is something wrong when a government can break the law and trample on constitutional rights and then ignore addressing the violation,” says Lutes. “I appreciate Premier Houston inherited a complicated mess from his predecessor, but that doesn’t absolve his government from its obligation to repair the damage.

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, NS Supreme Court Justice John Keith ruled that Bill 75, which imposed a contract on teachers and ended a legal job action, was unconstitutional calling the legislation both “vengeful” and “terribly wrong.”

On June 16<sup>th</sup>, Premier Houston stated that his government would not appeal the decision and committed to a remedy. During a post-cabinet press conference, he told reporters: “We’ll be working certainly in good faith, as the court has asked with the other parties, on remedies moving forward. We’ll work in good faith on those.”

“In the six months since the court’s ruling we have yet to achieve any progress towards a remedy,” says Lutes. “As a result, the NSTU had no option but to once again be forced to defend teachers’ rights by appealing to the courts. Lutes explains, “We want to work with this government to remedy an illegal contract through dialogue. Teachers regret that once again we may have no choice but to seek justice from the courts.”

“It’s imperative that both sides work together to rebuild the trust that was lost as a result of Bill 75. We won’t improve morale and address the accelerating teacher shortage if the antagonism of the previous government is simply replaced with indifference from the current government.” Lutes further stated, “If the calculation by government is that teachers will forget the illegal contract imposed upon them as we approach a new round of collective bargaining, I can state categorically, that will not be the case.”