



### Motion Regarding Opposition to Elements of Bill 56

WHEREAS, until now, lobbying activities (i.e activities undertaken by individuals or organizations with a view to influencing decision-making of lawmakers) in Quebec were governed by the *Lobbying Ethics and Transparency Act* [1];

WHEREAS, Jean-Marc Fournier, Minister responsible for Access to Information and the Reform of Democratic Institutions, has recently introduced Bill 56 [2], a law meant to expand upon and replace the *Lobbying Ethics and Transparency Act* [1];

WHEREAS, Bill 56 expands the definition of lobbyists to include non-profit organizations and non-incorporated groups (a definition that would include the SSMU, other student groups, and community organizations) [1,2];

WHEREAS, Bill 56 would increase the administrative burden on student groups who wish to lobby the government in the following way [1,2];

- Require every individual who lobbies the government on behalf of a student group to register as a lobbyist (as opposed only the organization needing to register, as is currently the case)
- Increase reporting requirements to quarterly reports on lobbying activities
- Require all lobbyists to register and provide quarterly reports, even if they do not lobby as a regular part of their duties (as an concrete example, if the SSMU President decided to send an email to an elected official about a SSMU position, even if this was done once in the year, they would be required to register as a lobbyist first)
- Requires third parties to register (i.e the SSMU would need to register if it decided to lobby on behalf of another student association on campus)

WHEREAS, failure to follow the Bill's reporting requirements, which represent a significant burden for smaller student groups and community organizations who may not have the training and staff required to comply, may result of fines of 3000\$ to 25,000\$ for individuals, and 9000\$ to 75000\$ for entities;

WHEREAS, there is widespread opposition of non-profit and community groups to this bill [3] who consider the bill to be "administratively unmanageable" and assert that the "new legal measures would limit the exercise of democracy and citizenship, infringe on the association and expression rights, along with the defense of the population and of the common good. They denounce the project that would put on the same level community-based organizations and private companies such as pharmaceutical and oil companies looking for privileges and financial benefits,";

WHEREAS, groups opposed to the inclusion of non-profits and community groups in this legislation have created a petition on the National Assembly website which has 8121 signatures as of March 6th, 2016 [4];

WHEREAS, Minister Fournier has promised to hold consultations on this bill [1] which will likely include parliamentary commissions where groups may present memoranda on this issue;



BE IT RESOLVED, that the SSMU take a position against the inclusion of non-profits and community organisations in the Bill;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the SSMU sign the petition on the National Assembly website [4];

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the SSMU, through the Office of the VP External, prepare a memorandum detailing its opposition to the inclusion of non-profits and community organisations in the Bill for presentation at any parliamentary commission on this issue.

Respectfully Submitted,  
David Benrimoh and Marina Smailes, Senate Caucus Representative  
Emily Boytinck, VP External Affairs  
Chelsea Kingzett, Environment Representative  
Adam Templer, Arts Representative  
Valerie Olivier, Law Representative  
Kahli-Ann Douglas, Services Representative

References:

1. <http://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=60cc19c9-92d8-4d47-b24a-055dcd079d69>
2. <http://www.assnat.qc.ca/en/travaux-parlementaires/projets-loi/projet-loi-56-41-1.html>
3. <http://fechimm.coop/en/nouvelles/bill-56>
4. <https://www.assnat.qc.ca/fr/exprimez-votre-opinion/petition/Petition-5353/index.html>