



Dougald Lamont

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Manitoba Liberal Caucus 169-450 Broadway Ave R3C 0V8

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Dear Premier Pallister and Mr. Kinew,

Bill 64, the government's plan to restructure Manitoba's entire education system proposes massive, far-reaching effects on virtually every aspect of Manitoba's families, communities, politics and economy.

We believe that a change of this magnitude to one of the core functions of Manitoba's government requires a clear indication of popular support.

Therefore, we are requesting all-party cooperation to have a referendum on whether Bill 64 should be adopted or not.

Of course, this would also require all-party agreement for emergency passage of new referendum legislation. We would be more than amenable to ensuring this happens. The substance of the enhanced referendum bill has already been introduced once before.

We would like to present our case for why a referendum is the right choice for whether Bill 64 is adopted or not.

First, the changes proposed in the bill will affect the education of 200,000 children, their parents, and every community in Manitoba. It will have impact on local employment, the economy, and democracy. Education has an annual budget of approximately \$2-billion a year.

Whether children can access quality education can make the difference for how they will live their entire lives. A community school is one of the foundations of local economic growth.

Mr. Pallister, you have often spoken of the need for improved referendum legislation so that Manitobans can have a direct say in whether crown corporations are privatized, or whether certain taxes can be raised.

The impacts of Bill 64 will be massive and long-lasting, and the decision to eliminate elected school trustees and local boards, and the other changes in Bill 64, were not part of the PC Platform of 2019.

We believe that change of this magnitude requires a popular mandate from Manitobans. We hope we can agree to pass updated referendum legislation and have a referendum on this legislation within a reasonable period of time.

Respectfully,

Dougald Lamont, MLA St. Boniface