

May 12, 2016

Cathay Wagantall, MP
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2
Email: cathay.wagantall@parl.gc.ca

Dear Ms. Wagantall,

On behalf of the Prairie Valley School Division and as a member of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, we write this letter in support of BILL C-241, An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act (school authorities). This proposed bill would amend the Excise Tax Act to increase the goods and services tax rebate rate for school authorities from 68% to 100%.

School boards across the country are funded through provincial government grants and, to some degree, through federal transfer payments. This funding is tax-generated. Therefore, charging the GST on school board purchases means that the federal government is, in effect, adding a layer of taxation. This form of double taxation costs school boards millions of dollars and takes money away from the classrooms where it belongs.

School boards continuously strive to innovate, streamline, and become more effective in the face of increasingly restricted resources. The GST exacerbates these struggles. In addition, it imposes a complicated and expensive administrative burden. The current system of rebates, claims, and payments is onerous and complex and, in pursuit of maximizing resources for students, school boards are obliged to engage expertise to help obtain the largest rebates possible while complying with regulations.

In Saskatchewan, like our counterparts across this country, we strive to maintain the high quality of public education for which Canada is admired around the world. We believe that it is the intent of the federal government to support school boards in their pursuit of excellence. We call on the government to recognize the value of efficiency in ensuring that school boards across Canada can maximize the revenues that provincial taxpayers provide to support education. We urge all Members of Parliament to support BILL C-241, An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act (school authorities).

Sincerely,



Janet Kotylak
Board Chair

cc: Kevin Waugh, Member of Parliament, Saskatoon — Grasswood

