

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**GOVERNMENT'S IN-HOUSE LAWYERS VOTE 97 PER CENT IN FAVOUR OF  
JOB ACTION OVER BILL 5, WHICH DENIES THEM THEIR OWN UNION**

**Victoria, B.C. (February 13, 2023):** Following the [introduction of legislation \(Bill 5\)](#) Thursday by Minister of Finance Katrine Conroy interfering with their organizing application to the BC Labour Relations Board (LRB), members of the BC Government Lawyers Association (BCGLA) have voted 97.1 per cent in support of job action.

The decisive weekend vote comes as debate on Bill 5 is expected in the legislature today.

The BCGLA represents 350 civil lawyers employed by the BC government to provide legal advice and write government legislation. They have been in a legal battle with the government over the lawyers' unionization bid for years. This month, the LRB was to hear its application under the *Labour Relations Code* for recognition as their representative for collective bargaining purposes.

But the entire LRB process would be rendered moot by the passage of Bill 5, says BCGLA President Gareth Morley. "Bill 5 will force most of our members to join the Professional Employees Association (PEA), a union that none of them voted or signed a card for. The PEA and the BCGLA stand together in saying it is workers who choose unions, not employers."

"Our members have spoken loud and clear. With a 97 per cent mandate of support, our job action committee will start planning right away to oppose Bill 5 with several tactics being considered," Morley adds. "No government in Canadian history has brought in legislation to stop a labour board certifying a union before."

"We have already written Premier Eby and Attorney-General Niki Sharma to uphold the promise made to us in 2018 by the government under Premier Horgan, that they would not force us into any other government-selected union without consultation," added BCGLA Secretary Margo Foster. "The irony is that this promise has been broken by the same NDP government that passed Bill 10 last year to prevent employer interference with workers choosing whether to organize and, if so, who will represent them. But when they are the employer, they do what no other employer in B.C. can and override a legitimate labour hearing process, just to win."

### **About the BCGLA**

The BC Government Lawyers Association advocates for 350 government civil lawyers in matters of remuneration, benefits, conditions of employment and matters of professional interest relating to employment.

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