

Complaint Lodged Regarding Official Languages Commissioner

Description

Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick
Legislative Building, Centre Block
P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB
E3B 5H1

February 20th, 2020

Attention: Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Daniel Guitard

This letter is an official complaint regarding the Official Languages Commissioner, Shirley MacLean and her office.

The original complaint was filed Feb 12, 2020 through the Official Languages Commissioner's website complaint system. I have since been directed by the Commissioner's legal counsel, Marc Wagg, to submit my complaint to you as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly through the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Don Forestell .

This complaint is regarding the television advertisements by the Commissioner of Official Languages, which are airing daily during television prime-time hours on English television.

The advertisements are telling English NB to learn another language and be proud no matter how silly you may look. The not so subtle implication behind these advertisements is for English in NB to learn French. This, in and of itself, is not my complaint.

However, my complaint is:

1. The advertisements are not in both official languages.
2. The Commissioner did not create an equal advertisement encouraging French NB to learn another language or English.

The Commissioner is responsible for the promotion of the advancement of both official languages in the province of New Brunswick, as is clearly stated in the Language Commissioner's mandate.

Mandate – The position of Commissioner was created by the Official Languages Act of New Brunswick in 2002. The Commissioner of Official Languages for New Brunswick is an independent agent of the Legislative Assembly. The role of the Commissioner is to investigate, report on, and make recommendations, with regard, to compliance with the Official Languages Act. The Commissioner is also responsible for the promotion of the advancement of both official languages in the province.

New Brunswick is a bilingual province that we are told by government is seeking equality for both official language groups. Our Official Languages Commissioner should be the one setting the example

by producing all advertisements in both official languages to promote both official languages, not just one language as is the case in the recent advertisements.

I had hope that the new Official Languages Commissioner would stay true to her mandate. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

Heather Wilkins

Category

1. News

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