

To the House of Commons Finance Committee,

My name is Adam Melnick and I am the Apprenticeship Coordinator and Health and Safety Trainer for the Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers Local 95 of Ontario. I am also a 30 year old husband and father of two daughters aged 6 and 4 who resides in Bowmanville Ontario and was born here in Canada. I graduated from Sir Sandford Fleming College in Peterborough with honours and have been in the Union Construction Industry as a Heat and Frost Insulator for nearly 10 years.

I have major concerns with the undue financial hardship and constraints that Bill C-377 will place on my labour union if put into motion and the fact that it will ultimately affect myself and my household in a negative capacity.

Bill C-377 claims to create an opportunity for the public and union members to better gauge the effectiveness and financial integrity and health of unions, as explained to me in an email from my MP Bev Oda.

My first concern with this is the fact that Union Members, by the nature of their relationship to their unions have more than full disclosure. They also have the ability to vote down spending by the elected officials within the union. Unions also have elected members put in place to serve as checks and balances when any spending is being planned or occurs. As a Union Member I can honestly say I have no need for new federal rules to fix this situation, it is not broken.

My second concern lies in the fact the Bill C-377 is only targeting Construction Labour Union Organizations. If this is truly designed to better gauge all unions why are not all Unions in Canada, including CUPE, the Teacher's Union along with the CAW included in this bill? It appears that they are not included because of the fact that a bill of this nature being moved against those large Unions would result in direct loss of votes and potentially ridings for the conservative party.

Clarity within my Construction Labour Union has never been a concern. I know if I have questions or want answers in regards to spending and actions I have the right to ask for it and my elected Union Officials will gladly answer. These officials are elected by their membership and strive to not remove themselves too far from the membership they serve.

Unfortunately this Bill C-377 is reminding Organized Construction Workers in Canada that their Government elected officials may be that removed from their constituents that they are unable to truly gauge the hardships this will cause on hundreds of thousands of households across Canada.

When the government continues to act against Organized Labour in any capacity they are simply causing mental and financial stress on the households of Organized Workers across this country.

The only way my Union can meet the requirements set out in Bill C-377 is to increase the working dues of its members. That means the working men and women have to pay more to their Union to accommodate the red tape being put in place by the Federal Government.

I already accept increased taxes, deductions, fees, and ever increasing operating costs to live in this country. It continually is becoming more and more costly to live and operate in Canada. I am fortunate that I am a Union construction worker and that I have a wage that allows my family to operate close to comfortable in this country, close to comfortable, not comfortable.

My only assurance that I will be able to provide a decent quality of life for my family is in the security of the fact that I am a member of a Labour Union. Now the Conservative government will be placing hardship on the existence of that very Union if Bill C-377 is passed.

My Conservative MP of Durham Bev Oda claims that her party has put in place legislation designed to increase transparency in government agencies and corporations. This is the same MP who only after being discovered about poor decisions in regards to the spending of taxpayers dollars, offered a small apology, but offered no clarification on the reasons she made these decisions with the taxpayers dollars.

My labour Union is held in much greater transparency and scrutiny by its members and would do more than hide behind someone else's words. It is unfortunate that the Conservative Federal Government is trying to place accountability and transparency on Organized Construction Organizations, but clearly is not doing so in it's own house.

My MP also tells me in an email that they are trying to reduce the unnecessary burden on taxpayers. I cannot find any information on the projected cost from the Federal Government on how much the implementation of Bill C-377 will cost the taxpayers.

If my 1800 member Provincial Union may have to spend tens of thousands extra a year to accommodate the amount of red tape and auditing required by this bill if passed, we must question how much will be spent by the government to review these reports and audits and enforce this bill for all of Canada.

We are a small organization in comparison to the majority of organizations that will be affected by this bill. It is plain to see that the costs are relevant to the size of the organization, and can become astronomical for all of the organizations affected.

With hundreds of thousands of Organized Construction Workers working in Canada I cannot even fathom the estimated cost to the taxpayer. With this high of a new expense to the tax paying citizens of Canada, we must question what will the citizens of Canada gain? Will they gain clarity to questions they are not even asking?

The Gun registry cost this country billions and that was to record a single serial number for the purchase of a firearm. We are discussing large scale accounting and auditing procedures for thousands and thousands of transactions and expenses across this country for thousands of workers in the Organized Construction Sector. The cost could be extreme, and to what end?

Organized Construction Workers are proud people. They are proud of their trade, proud of their country and proud of their union. When people ask members of Organized Labour questions about their unions they answer, they are proud that they are part of a group that is designed for the betterment of the working people and their families of this country. Again I think there is some confusion from the Federal Government on who is trying to hide operating costs and expenses. Unions and their officials are proud when they spend to help charities, families and the workers in unionized labour.

While being a member of a Construction Union, Bill C-377 will increase the costs to be a union member, and while being a citizen of Canada I will have to pay more in some capacity to have my government put this bill into action and operate. I will be financially affected twice to carry the load for a Bill that as both an Organized Construction Worker and Canadian Citizen I see as completely

unnecessary. Bill C-377 simply represents an additional financial burden being placed on me, my family and my union to solve a problem that doesn't exist.

I strongly recommend that the House of Commons Finance Committee see that Bill C-377 will not benefit the working citizens of this country. I am sure someone will gain from this Bill, but I can assure you as one of hundreds of thousands of Organized Construction Workers here in Canada it will only serve to put financial strain on my household and jeopardize the foundation of my Union. Thus putting at risk my ability to make a fair wage in the construction sector that allows this great country to keep growing and developing into one of the best places in the world to live and raise a family. Please do not fail to hear the voices of the working men and women who belong to the Organized Construction Sector who as a result to the implementation of Bill C-377 will suffer further financial hardships.

Respectively,

Adam Melnick  
JAC Coordinator/ Health and Safety Trainer  
Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers Local 95 Ontario