

February 26, 2018

**SENT VIA EMAIL [ResourceStewardship.Committee@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:ResourceStewardship.Committee@assembly.ab.ca)**

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship  
c/o Committee Clerk  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 9820 – 107 Street  
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E7

Dear Committee Members,

**RE: REVIEW OF THE *CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ACT***

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the review process of the *Conflicts of Interest Act*. On behalf of Lethbridge College, we appreciate and welcome the opportunity to submit a written response and look forward to enhancing our present Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest policies to ensure they are robust and fair. Openness and accountability are tremendously important values at Lethbridge College.

We do believe, however, that one-size restrictions may not fit all Agencies, Boards and Commissions (ABCs). There is a wide range of ABCs in the province and one example is the Comprehensive Community Institutions (CCIs) group in Alberta. Lethbridge College is one of 11 publicly funded CCIs in Alberta who are responsible for stewardship of adult learning opportunities within their defined regions of Alberta and who provide a broad range of programs that prepare learners for employment or for further study. We believe strongly that compliance requirements should be right-sized for the requirements of the legislation to the complexity of the organization. CCIs have unique challenges in meeting the needs of their learners while remaining sustainable but are much different in their reach and scope when compared to even larger publicly funding post-secondary institutions.

An example relates to Designated Senior Officials. Should presidents and board chairs of CCIs be subject to the current restrictions of DSOs?

CEO positions in CCIs are responsible for the successful and effective operation of learning organizations and are employees of provincially appointed boards. At Lethbridge College, as with other CCIs, executive limitation policies are in place that clearly define the kinds of decisions that the president cannot make without the authority of the board or government but she is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the college and with the board, its sustainability. Should presidents become DSOs, then we request that careful consideration be given to the nature of the role and recognition be made that restrictions on holding stocks and other securities as well as a “12-month cooling-off period from holding certain positions” seem excessive and unreasonable.

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With respect to designating board chairs as DSOs, board chairs fulfill a volunteer role in ensuring the integrity of the board's governance process and in representing the board when liaising with government and the external community. Qualified candidates for these roles often include private business owners and professionals who are willing to give of their time. Current restrictions for DSOs would most certainly shrink the pool of qualified applicants and cause candidates to seriously consider submitting an application for a volunteer role where such restrictions exist. All this does not mean that we do not require Codes of Conduct. Current policy and the board's code of conduct are clear about conflicts of interest and disclosure requirements and there is clear delineation between the public board member's role at the institution and their own personal business and professional lives.

We do not envy your role in this very important review and wish you all the best. Thank you again for the opportunity to make a written submission. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Kristin Ailsby.

Kristin Ailsby, BA, MA, LL.B  
Board Chair

dmk