

**Management Board
of Cabinet**

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October 21, 2004

Mr. Ken Brown
554 Bolivar Street
Peterborough, Ontario
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Dear Mr. Brown:

A copy of your article "Sound Off: Let Public In" has been forwarded to me by the Honourable Mary Anne Chambers, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. As Minister responsible for Ontario's public sector access and privacy legislation, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the issues explored in your article.

Some years ago, the Ontario Government determined to not cover universities under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA). The universities were to implement access and privacy policies consistent with the spirit of FIPPA. In 1993, the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) provided universities a document entitled *Guidelines on Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection*, which was intended to help each of them to develop consistent access and privacy policies.

It is my understanding that most universities have developed and implemented detailed access and privacy policies consistent with the COU Guidelines. These policies can generally be found on university web sites.

Minister Chambers' letter to you refers to the *Audit Statute Amendment Act* which, if passed, would expand the Provincial Auditor's powers over spending by transfer partners like universities.

The Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act (PSSDA), passed in 1996, provides further transparency by requiring the disclosure of the names, positions, salaries and taxable benefits of public sector employees who are paid more than \$100,000.00 in a given year. Ontario's universities are covered by the PSSDA. Each year, the Ontario Government publishes a detailed compendium of this information, which is available to the public.

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The Government is committed to transparency and will continue to examine options for enhancing transparency in the Ontario Public Service and public institutions in the Province. The Minister of Training Colleges and Universities and I are actively considering possibilities for further action to ensure transparency. This includes a review of coverage of universities under Ontario's freedom of information and protection of privacy legislation. We will consider all relevant factors, such as other provinces' experiences and possible impacts on the universities.

Thank you for the important views contained in your article.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerry Phillips". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gerry" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Phillips".

Gerry Phillips
Chair
Management Board of Cabinet

c: Honourable Mary Anne Chambers
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Jeff Leal, MPP
Peterborough