



Government  
of  
Saskatchewan

Minister of Finance  
Legislative Building  
Regina, SK Canada S4S 0B3

AUG 08 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email expressing concerns about compensation and allowing me to provide some context.

Our Government's 2019-20 Budget provides the right balance, and puts forward a sustainable fiscal plan which invests in the priorities of Saskatchewan people and carefully manages spending, including compensation expense.

I fully appreciate that employees across the public service, in your case in the health care sector, do valuable work for the people of our province. We know employers and unions understand the fiscal environment in Saskatchewan, and while we have returned to a modest surplus our finances are tight. Sticking to our fiscal plan means we will continue to invest in what is important to Saskatchewan people while controlling spending.

It is unfortunate that you are using a comparison of your chosen profession to one that is totally unrelated to make your determination on what is fair. It is also misleading to only select two years of increases to MLA salaries while ignoring the compensation MLAs received in the years that led up to the years you referenced. For your information, in the last 5 years, including the most recent increase, MLAs have received: 0.0%, 1.6%, minus 3.5%, 3.5%, and 2.3% which equates to a 3.9% increase over 5 years. In the 5 years prior to the expiration of the collective bargaining agreement with SEIU-West members, they have received increases of: 2.0%, 1.5%, 1.5%, 1.55%, and 1.95% which equates to an 8.5% increase over 5 years.

It is also worth noting that employees within the public service also receive incremental wage increases within their pay grid structure that is independent as well as in addition to any wage increases that are negotiated through the collective bargaining process. MLAs have no such incremental wage increases.

Over the last decade a lot of effort has been put in by the public sector unions and the government bargaining teams to ensure that Saskatchewan employees are paid fairly when compared to their professional counterparts in the western Canadian provinces of British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba. Through those efforts, almost all public sector employees are receiving wages within +/- 5% of the western Canadian average of their professional colleagues.

Of note, MLAs in Saskatchewan are paid almost 10% below the western Canadian average of their counterparts and in fact, Saskatchewan MLAs are among the lowest paid in Canada. Our Government has confidence in the collective bargaining process, as it is the best way to achieve agreements that are fair to all parties.

Thank you for taking the time to share your concerns.

Sincerely,



Donna Harpauer  
Minister of Finance

cc: Honourable Jim Reiter, Minister of Health  
Greg Lawrence, MLA, Moosejaw Wakamow