



23 May 2014: For immediate release

## **Newfoundland Needs Strong Whistleblower Protection**

Newfoundland and Labrador's government has introduced a bill to protect those who expose serious wrongdoing and threats, i.e. whistleblowers, but is seeking to maintain a veil of secrecy around the Cabinet, even in the context of potentially criminal behaviour. The exception for cabinet documents was one of the key problems identified in an analysis released today by the Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD).

Newfoundland and Labrador is one of only two provinces in Canada which has still not adopted legislation to protect whistleblowers. Bill 1 aims to rectify that problem, but it has important shortcomings.

*"Blowing the whistle on acts of corruption or mismanagement is an incredibly brave act, which can expose employees to serious personal and professional risks,"* said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *"Governments need to put in place robust legal regimes to protect people who disclose information for the public good."*

Other major problems identified in the analysis include:

- It is limited to employees in the public sector, whereas better practice, for example as reflected in the UK's Public Interest Disclosure Act, covers the private and voluntary sectors as well.
- It only protects disclosures to the Citizens' Representative, an ombudsman, instead of recognising that in some cases public disclosures are needed.
- It is limited to wrongdoing committed after the law comes into force.
- It provides insufficient protection to whistleblowers.

CLD calls on Newfoundland and Labrador's House of Assembly to review the Bill in light of our analysis and to amend it to bring it into line with better practice both across Canada and internationally.

To read the full analysis, go to: <http://www.law-democracy.org/live/newfoundland-needs-strong-whistleblower-protection/>.

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