

Thursday, February 4, 2021

SUDBURY, ON**Open Letter to Minister Romano from Laurentian University Neighbours
Re: University's Reckless Spending**

Dear Minister Romano,

We are contacting you regarding Laurentian University's filing for court protection under the *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act*. Specifically, we wish to bring evidence of ongoing reckless spending by the Laurentian University Board of Governors to your attention and request your immediate assistance in resolving the frivolous litigation that the Board has initiated against us. Further, we respectfully ask that you endorse our call for the immediate resignation of Mr. Claude Lacroix, Laurentian Board Chair, and all Board members.

The University's unprecedented declaration of insolvency is devastating but not surprising, and has the potential to unjustly affect a number of students, staff, and faculty. It has also eroded confidence in the Board's ability to effectively govern the University and validated longstanding concerns about the Board's decisions, priorities, and spending.

One such example of the Board's misplaced priorities and wasteful spending is the property litigation in which we find ourselves. The Board is suing us over a small encroachment of our home's septic system onto University property. All evidence points to the fact that this development faux pas was a genuine mistake by the prior homeowners, septic installers, and the health unit at a time (2004) when we did not own our home. The septic system is approximately 1.3 km 'as the bird flies' from the closest University building and it does not have direct road access. It's therefore easy to understand why this insignificant issue to Laurentian went undiscovered until 2016, at which time we inadvertently discovered the encroachment and brought it to the Board's attention. Financial statements show that the Board values the land in question at less than \$2,000.

To date, the Board has spent more than \$150,000 on the property lawsuit against us. This is after first inviting our purchase offer for the land at fair market value and then subsequently refusing our generous purchase offer. The Board's actions in this matter raise a number of questions about transparency, accountability, and trust. While our issue may be inconsequential to the University as a whole, it highlights that the current Board is not fulfilling its fiduciary duty to the University and should therefore resign.

For further details about our situation, please refer to our recent Sudbury Star opinion editorial on the Board's failures (*Column: Laurentian board failing in its duties*; <https://bit.ly/2MI40at>). Please visit our website (www.laurentian.org) to learn more about the ongoing waste of taxpayer dollars.

We sincerely thank you for your leadership and concerns over Laurentian University governance. We welcome the opportunity to work with the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities and Ernst & Young Inc. to resolve the aforementioned litigation.

Sincerely,



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