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Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union

NEWS RELEASE

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Government opens door to selling Crowns

The government's proposal to narrow the definition of privatization to allow for selling off nearly half of a Crown corporation without consulting the Saskatchewan public is laying the groundwork for backdoor and secret privatization deals, according to SGEU.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the Sask. Party government is looking for quick sell offs of our province's Crown corporations . even though our Crowns are valuable public assets that generate revenue and provide vital services for Saskatchewan families and communities,+says SGEU President Bob Bymoan.

It's disappointing that the Sask. Party did not reveal the full scope of its privatization agenda during the election campaign earlier this year,+he adds.

Currently, major Crowns are protected by the *Crown Corporations Public Ownership Act*, which requires a high level of scrutiny and public support before privatization can take place. But government has introduced new legislation that will give it the authority to sell off up to 49 per cent of a Crown corporation, without the sale being considered a privatization. That gives government the right to privatize without public support or consent, meaning Saskatchewan people will not have the opportunity to have an open dialogue about the decision.

Saskatchewan people built Crown corporations to ensure that everyone has fair and equal access to services . like power, electricity and communications. When we own and control services, we can make our own choices . about prices, service levels, and employment,+Bymoan says.

Crowns create good, family-supporting jobs in local communities. They ensure that everyone, even in remote areas, gets the high-quality services they need,+he notes.

Privatization too often sends jobs and profits out of the province, and out of the country,+adds Bymoan. It puts the focus on generating profits for shareholders, instead of meeting the needs of Saskatchewan people.+

SGEU believes that before any more Crowns are broken up and put on the auction block, Saskatchewan people should have the right to know what is happening and to have their say.

“Crowns belong to all of us, and all Saskatchewan people have the right to participate fully in any decisions about the future of those public assets,” Bymoen says. “We urge Saskatchewan people to tell their MLAs that our Crowns are not for sale, and that we do not want government pursuing backdoor, secret privatization agendas.”

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