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April 12, 2016

Andrea Bartlett, President
Ryerson Students' Union, CFS Local 24

By email only

RE: Immediate reinstatement of Gilary Massa

Dear Ms. Bartlett:

I am President of AMAPCEO, the union representing more than 13,000 professional employees in the Ontario Public Service and in the broader public sector. Our members include policy analysts, financial analysts, economists and program supervisors – many of whom work in the higher education sector.

I am writing regarding your decision to terminate the employment of Gilary Massa just 3 months into her parental leave. Ms. Massa's dismissal is an apparent and obvious contravention of the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Employment Standards Act. It is an affront to some of the most basic employment standards and protections – the right of new parents not to be discriminated against on the basis of their pregnancy or family status.

Like countless other trade union leaders and public figures, I am hopeful that the RSU Board of Directors will make this right by reinstating Ms. Massa to her rightful position and providing compensation to account for the emotional distress, financial hardship and embarrassment that you have caused. I urge your Board of Directors to conduct an audit of your human resources and human rights protocols, with an eye to preventing future mistreatment.

For decades, labour unions, in partnership with university and college student movements and social justice activists, have fought to attain equal opportunity for women, for people of colour and for parents. The provision of a universally enforced and protected parental leave is one of our movement's greatest modern achievements. The idea that parents, especially women, should have to choose between providing a loving family environment or having a successful career is a throwback to an archaic mentality.

Ms. Massa's termination sends a chilling message to women and new parents everywhere that their right to have both a family and career is in jeopardy. Unfortunately, your actions reflect extremely poorly on the Ryerson Students Union, and by extension, Ryerson University.

AMAPCEO stands in solidarity with Ms. Massa in her Human Rights Tribunal case against the Ryerson Student Union. We hope your Executive and Board of Directors will seek to resolve this matter with the greatest respect and expediency so that you can resume a more positive role in the community.

Sincerely,

Dave Bulmer
President

Cc:

Renu Mandhane, Chief Commissioner, Ontario Human Rights Commission
Mohamed Lachemi, President, Ryerson University
Chris Buckley, President, Ontario Federation of Labour
Fred Hahn, President, CUPE Ontario
Shiraz Vally, President, CUPE 1281
Rajeau Hoilett, Chairperson, Canadian-Federation of Students—Ontario
Saron Gebresellassi, Legal Counsel