



Former Fox News Host, Co-Founder of Gymnasts for Change, Canadian Senator Among Experts and Lawmakers at International Roundtable on NDAs

September 19, 2023: Experts, political leaders and anti-NDA advocates are meeting for a groundbreaking International roundtable on the abuse of non-disclosure agreements — also known as NDAs or gag orders — in workplaces, sports organizations and universities, as well as by unions, lawyers and others.

The International Roundtable on NDA Policy & Legislation is happening online **Wednesday, September 27 at 11 am ET**. It will include updates on Bill S-261, the historic Canadian legislation that aims to stop federally funded organizations from using federal dollars to finance and enforce NDAs. If passed, no federally funded organization in Canada — from government to Hockey Canada to CBC — could pay to silence victims of harassment and discrimination.

Participants will also discuss the proposed provincial legislation in British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and Nova Scotia, as well as the sweeping policy changes being made across Canada and around the globe.

Speakers include:

- [Senator Marilou McPhedran](#) — the Canadian Senator who earlier this year tabled the bill that would stop the funding or enforcement of NDAs in all federally funded agencies
- [Darren Fisher](#) — Liberal Member of Parliament for Dartmouth-Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia
- [Dr. Julie Macfarlane](#) — Emerita Distinguished Professor of Law at the University of Windsor, Member of the Order of Canada, and co-founder of Can't Buy My Silence, the anti-NDA advocacy group behind many recent advances in NDA legislation and policy
- [Julie Roginsky](#) — former Fox News host and co-founder of Lift Our Voices, a group that aims to eradicate workplace silencing mechanisms such as NDAs
- [Jo-Anne Stark](#) — the BC-based lawyer who tabled the game-changing Canadian Bar Association resolution to discourage the use of non-disclosure agreements and push for legal reforms
- [Kim Shore](#) — co-founder of Gymnasts for Change Canada, an organization that is “by survivors, for survivors,” and working to abolish NDAs in sport
- [Diana DiZoglio](#) — State Auditor for Massachusetts who ran on a “no public money for NDAs” platform and introduced legislation to end the use of state-funded NDAs
- [Jason MacLean](#) — Former President of the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU), the first union to resolve to ban NDAs in cases of workplace sexual harassment, and now Secretary-Treasurer of the National Union of Public and General Employees

“Over the past two years, the tide has turned dramatically against NDAs. Political leaders, major institutions and businesses have all begun to recognize the lasting and unnecessary harm they do, both to victims and the broader public, and are vowing to end their use. We are seeing one watershed moment after another,” says Macfarlane, who founded Can't Buy My Silence with Harvey Weinstein whistleblower Zelda Perkins in 2021.

“Even institutions and lawyers who still want to keep using NDAs are waking up to the fact that they’ve become a major liability. Nobody wants to be the next organization that’s caught using NDAs to silence victims of harassment and discrimination, as Hockey Canada did.”

Non-disclosure agreements were initially used in workplaces to protect trade secrets. More recently they have been used to cover up abuses in businesses, schools, youth clubs, universities, religious institutions, and other organizations. Meanwhile, victims and whistleblowers experience an added layer of harm as they are prevented from speaking with friends, loved ones, coworkers or even therapists about the abuses they’ve experienced.

The #MeToo movement exposed the extensive use of NDAs to silence victims, and Can’t Buy My Silence co-founder Zelda Perkins was the first person to break an NDA she signed decades earlier with Harvey Weinstein. Perkins was later named a Person of the Year by both *Time* and *The Guardian*.

Because of the efforts of Can’t Buy My Silence and other advocates, a growing number of businesses and governments are shifting their policies, and BBC, Google and Apple are among the many organizations that have pledged to stop using NDAs to cover up misconduct. Seventeen U.S. states have also legislated to restrict the use of NDAs.

“For too long, NDAs have been forced on victims who are told they must protect perpetrators or abusive organizations, and then those perpetrators go on to abuse even more,” says Macfarlane. “It’s time to put an end to this shameful practice by passing laws and policies that protect victims from a lifetime of silence, and end these repetitive patterns of abuse.”

To RSVP for the roundtable or to arrange interviews, please contact:

- Stacey Buchholzer, Campaign Coordinator: NDA_RT@outlook.com
- [More information](#) and [victim testimonies](#) at [Can’t Buy My Silence](#)

Major Legislative and Policy Developments in Canada, 2022-2023

April 2022: Nova Scotia’s [Non-Disclosure Agreements Act](#) gets its first reading

May 2022: PEI’s [Non-Disclosure Agreements Act](#), the first of its kind in the country, comes into force

June 2022: The Nova Scotia Union of Public and Government Employees (NSGEU) becomes the first union to resolve to ban NDAs in cases of workplace sexual harassment

November 2022: As part of Manitoba’s [Non-Disclosure Agreements Act](#), parliamentarians hold a committee hearing where more than 20 members of the public [testify about their NDAs](#) for the first time

December 2022: Ontario Government passes a law [banning universities from using NDAs](#) to cover up faculty/student sexual misconduct

February 2023: A Canadian Bar Association [AGM resolution](#) discouraging members from using NDAs in cases of abuse, discrimination and harassment passes by 94 percent. It also commits the CBA to lobbying government for legal reforms

March 2023: British Columbia's [Non-Disclosure Agreements Act](#), introduced by Green Party leader Sonia Furstenuau, gets its first reading

May 2023: Senator Marilou McPhedran tables federal [Can't Buy Silence Act](#), which would bar federally funded agencies from using federal dollars to fund or enforce NDAs in cases of harassment and discrimination

May 2023: Sports Canada announces [it will remove the current NDA clause](#) from its athlete contract template (not yet acted on)

June 2023: Ontario's [Stopping the Misuse of Non-Disclosure Agreements Act](#), tabled by Ontario MPP and NDP Justice Critic Kristyn Wong-Tam, gets its first reading

July 2023: Ontario's [Strengthening Post-Secondary Education](#) amendment, which prohibits Ontario universities from using NDAs to cover up faculty sexual misconduct, comes into force