



May 21, 2015

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur
Attorney General
McMurtry-Scott Building
720 Bay St, 11th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2S9

Beverly Leonard
Director, Court Operations - TORONTO REGIONAL OFFICE
16th Flr Suite 1601
700 Bay St
Toronto ON M5G1Z6

Delivered via email

Dear Attorney General Meilleur and Beverly Leonard,

RE: SAFETY IN CELLS AT 361 UNIVERSITY COURT HOUSE

The Toronto Lawyers Association has recently been apprised of some facts concerning the safety of prisoners and correctional officers at the 361 University Court House. These facts are of real concern to us.

We have been advised that in the last 12 months four prisoners have been attacked in the cells of 361 and hospitalized. An inmate was recently sliced by another prisoner in the cells and cut across the face for 24 stitches and permanent scarring. The knife used was not recovered. The seizure of 18 items including several knives and homemade weapons, all of which could cause death or serious bodily harm, are of particular concern. It is our belief that it is simply a matter of time before another attack and someone else is severely injured or killed. The prisoners at all court houses have an absolute right to be safe and be protected while in custody. Equally, the officers transporting the people to the court and all of us who appear in court have a right to be safe.

The only way to ensure the safety of the justice system participants at 361 University is for proper cameras to be installed forthwith in the cells and for a scanning chair to be provided for the use of the officers in those cells. These measures should be in place forthwith.

It has come to our attention that Justice McMahon may well be paying for these cameras out of his own pocket if funds are not provided very soon. As much as we commend this zeal, it is

deplorable when people working in a government court house have to pay themselves in order that other users be safe.

We urge the Attorney General in the strongest terms to immediately cause the proper equipment to be installed in order to ensure the safety of all justice system participants.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Mullings". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen Mullings, Vice-President
Toronto Lawyers Association

Cc: Justice McMahon