



Senate Ethics
Officer
Conseiller sénatorial
en éthique

Sent by email to: nmacadam@postmedia.com

October 20, 2020

Ms. Nicole MacAdam
Editor, The Ottawa Citizen
1101 Baxter Road, Box 5020
Ottawa ON K2C 3M4

Dear Ms. MacAdam:

**Re: The opinion article titled “Senate still faces battles over transparency”,
by Daniel Tsai, published on October 19, 2020**

The opinion article published on October 19th, 2020 by Daniel Tsai in your paper contains a number of factual errors.

First, the article says that then Speaker Leo Housakos “ordered the Senate Ethics Officer (SEO) to conduct a ‘workplace assessment’”. The Speaker of the Senate does not have the power to “order” the Senate Ethics Officer to do anything as the SEO is an independent officer of the Senate. The SEO did not conduct a workplace assessment. The workplace assessment was done by a private company commissioned by the Standing Senate Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration. Senator Housakos filed a complaint with the then SEO, my predecessor, and included in his complaint the completed workplace assessment report. My predecessor conducted a preliminary review of the matter and ultimately decided to conduct an inquiry under the *Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators*, a decision that only the SEO can make.

Second, the opinion article states that “the SEO’s work was secret and protected by parliamentary privilege”. Mr. Tsai confuses the inquiry by the SEO with the workplace assessment which was not made public. The SEO’s inquiry reports are all made public without exception, including the inquiry report concerning former Senator Meredith. This report was posted on the SEO’s website as soon as it was deposited with the Clerk of the Senate on June 28, 2019.

I would be grateful if you would publish these clarifications in order to correct the record.

Sincerely,

Pierre Legault