



László Molnárfi &lt;molnarfl@tcd.ie&gt;

---

## Minister Harris Says "Comply or Explain" re. pending legislation

---

László Molnárfi &lt;molnarfl@tcd.ie&gt;

27 June 2022 at 10:51

To

Dear reader,

We are extremely concerned on behalf of the students, academics and professional staff across the third-level education sector that a bill scheduled to appear in the Seanad tomorrow, Tuesday, and amendments stage on Friday, is shortsighted, reactionary, and undermines autonomy and academic freedom.

In the 300-page HEA Bill 2022, the Minister appears 356 times, in what is quite obvious to any reader a bureaucratic state takeover of academia which will change the way education functions in Ireland for the foreseeable future. Because of this deep concern, Students4Change backed by the Graduate Students' Union lodged an FOI request to Minister Harris' Office as we felt that there was not appropriate stakeholder consultation across our College and that we increasingly felt College was pandering to the department's and the Minister's whims. The agenda of his office and tone of Minister Harris we deem unacceptable upon inspecting the documents we received.

"Comply or explain", the words written by Minister Harris in reply to the IUA in document n. 18 and 19 sums up his attitude to the autonomy of the higher education sector throughout this bill. The bill has numerous detractors. The 23 documents we received include UCC and Maynooth calling the bill a "command and control" over universities, the IUA saying that aspects of the bill do not "accord with natural justice and will prove unworkable", and universities raising concerns that state control will lead to reduced EU funding.

You can find all the documents, and a detailed timeline, on the Students4Change in collaboration with the Graduate Students' Union, website at the following link. You can also find quotes from both myself from S4C and GSU President on the same link.

<https://students4change.eu/2022/06/27/foi-reveals-iaa-called-hea-bill-2022-unworkable-multiple-universities-dissent-at-command-and-control-structure/>

Students4Change and Trinity Graduate Students' Union, alongside Maynooth SU and NUIGSU, Senator David Norris, former Senator Sean Barrett, Senator Alice-Mary Higgins have all been heavily involved in challenging this bill. Students are outraged. Not many people realize the long-term effects that this will have.

+32 470 58 31 74 - Phone number for me.

+353 86 412 0444 - Gisèle Scanlon, President of the GSU.

In solidarity,

László Molnárfi

Students 4 Change

Chairperson



is an alliance of Marxist and Anarchist students from Trinity College Dublin focused on the housing crisis in relation to student accommodation, Irish neutrality, SU reform and other matters of student politics. Go on our website [students4change.eu](https://students4change.eu), follow us on social media or email us at [contact@students4change.eu](mailto:contact@students4change.eu)!