

June 19, 2020

Matthew Boswell  
Commissioner of Competition  
Competition Bureau Canada  
Place du Portage I  
50 Victoria Street, Room C-114  
Gatineau, Quebec  
K1A 0C9

Dear Mr. Boswell,

Re: CNIB

I am enclosing a copy of complaint that we filed with your department last month. It explains the challenges that blind Canadians face with only one supplier of critical services.

We discussed the complaint with two competition law officers and, although they were very sympathetic to our situation, they advised us there was little that they could do unless we could point to recent and specific examples where the CNIB engaged in uncompetitive behavior. Unfortunately, this poses a challenge when you are dealing with a monopoly that was established over a century ago and has dominated the blindness business and fund-raising ever since.

Working-age blind Canadians are suffering from a lack of training and the lack of training options. We need a champion who will stand up and have the courage to ask the question, "Is a non-profit monopoly the best model to serve blind Canadians? If not the Competition Bureau of Canada, whom can we turn?

I understand that your organization prepares reports and discussion papers on competition issues in Canada. I am writing to you personally on the hope that you will undertake to examine the concerns we have outlined in the attached report and, assuming you concur the absence of competition in the blindness business poses a problem, issue a report on the situation and challenges facing our members.

I would greatly appreciate a written response, one way or the other.

Yours truly,



Mary Ellen Gabias  
President  
Canadian Federation of the Blind