

David F. Barrett
Woodlands Manager

Hugh A. Barrett
Mill Manager

Keith H.W. Barrett
Sales & Administrative Mgr.

① 452-8137

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Fax (902) 865-6198
www.barrettlumber.com
barrett@barrettlumber.com

November 28, 2011

The Law Amendment Committee of Nova Scotia

Mr. Chairman (or Madam Chairman), Members of the Law Amendments Committee

Ladies and Gentlemen:

My name is David F. Barrett of 2 Maplewood Court, Beaver Bank. My brothers Keith, Hughie and I own and operate our 85 year old family forestry, wood truss manufacturing and building supply company in Beaver Bank. In your package is a copy of tonight's brief plus a back up letter I widely circulated this Spring to thousands of Nova Scotians and will continue to circulate this letter for I feel our politicians haven't a clue how they are destroying small business in Nova Scotia. It is a serious situation when a company like ours whose basic principal is to employ as many as possible so long as they have a strong work ethic, goes from 75 employees to less than 40 mainly because of

Government.

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~~INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF BUSINESS OWNERS (IFBO)~~
CANADIAN HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION (CHBA)
CANADIAN WOODLANDS FORUM (CWF)
CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY ENTERPRISE (CAFE)



Why I am here today

Somehow the Good Lord has given me the ability to see the unintended consequences of business and government decisions five, ten, fifteen, twenty years down the road. (Hughie's comments ""that darned David is always right").

The backbone of Nova Scotia

I hope that with my input tonight you will help stop further destruction of small business especially in Rural Nova Scotia. Like the straw that broke the camel's back, your proposed legislation will further the destruction.

I ask you

I ask you is this your objective to:

- destroy small business
- make work for lawyers
- make employers scared to hire
- give bureaucrats Hitler like power (page 13) 12
- to have a sneaky appeal process
- cater to large unionized companies
- have small businesses downsize

- force small businesses to take hours and hours away from their business
- destroy Nova Scotia's middle class
- only want international companies working in Nova Scotia
- put Nova Scotians into a deep depression (page 23) / 3

I ask these questions because you better go back to the drawing board, if you don't want to reach these objectives.

I state here today that Nova Scotia is headed for a depression. How bad it will be will depend on you. If you keep destroying the foundation of businesses here in Nova Scotia, new businesses will not start. We will continue to lose established businesses. Many small businesses will downsize so they won't have to have employees.

I leave with you the task to take the time to read and digest the copy of the letter I have submitted. If you have any questions I will make myself available. It is a sickening feeling when the principles that have been taught to me by my father Harold T. Barrett that **"it is my Christian duty to provide employment to anyone with a work ethic"** is destroyed by Government for the most dangerous thing I can do today is employ.

Thank You,



David F. Barrett

attachment

- Unpaid penalties become a debt to the province
- SNSMR will initiate collection procedures. Options include:
 - garnish wages
 - inability to register a motor vehicle, or renew a driver's license, or renew a business license, etc.
 - income tax refund withheld

Appeals

- Number of Appeals 173
- Number of AP Appealed 304

Total Appeals: 477 *x 18.8% = 90 appeals dismissed*

- **Total Decisions: 53**
 - % Confirmed - 41.5 %
 - % Decreased - 33.9 %
 - % Revoked - 5.6 %
 - % Dismissed - 18.8 % *- Total charges 1025*

a Dept of Labour presentation at the NS Road Builders annual meeting Jan/11-

Penalties Amount Issued to Date

- **Employee Class - \$4370.00**
- **Supervisor / Self-employed Class - \$10,000.00**
- **Employer Class - \$600,483.22**

Total = \$614,853.22

BARRETT

◆ SINCE 1926 ◆

March 29, 2011

Dear Sir or Madam

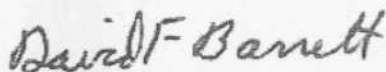
Please find enclosed, a copy of the documents I have sent to the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, and Mayor of Halifax Regional Municipality.

After reading this document and noting why Barrett Lumber Company was forced to downsize our workforce from 75 to less than 40 employees, I hope you will join me in working towards the survival of family and small businesses in rural Nova Scotia.

Please feel free to copy and share this brief with anyone you deem concerned.

If you have any questions, call me, David Barrett, at 902-452-8137, or if you would like further copies of the brief, please phone 902-864-1955 or email hq@eastlink.ca and one will be sent to you.

Yours Truly



David F. Barrett
Woodland Manager, Corporate Secretary
Barrett Lumber Company.

Building Materials | Roof Trusses | Engineered Wood Products

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A

Mill Manager

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March 21, 2011

Please Find Enclosed

- A. Contents
- B. David F. Barrett - Resume
- I. "The Law of Unintended Consequences"
- II. Open letter to: The Premier of Nova Scotia
The Leader of the Opposition Party of NS
The Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of NS
The Mayor of HRM
- III. How Government is forcing Barrett Lumber Company to quit hiring and downsize.
- IV. Jobs Barrett Lumber Company has been forced to eliminate.
- V. Article from The Chronicle herald: How the Department of Environment is helping to bankrupt HRM.
- VI. Brief I prepared to present to the HRM public hearing on garbage March 8, 2011.
This public hearing was cancelled.
- VII. Copy of a letter I sent to the Premier of NS - November 5, 2009.
- VIII. Points.
- IX. Other Views and Concerns.
- X. Examples of how Nova Scotia laws are going "too far".

Note: To those of you who make copies of parts of this brief, please include a copy of #1 - "The Law of Unintended Consequences" so others know where I am coming from.

Thanks,

David F Barrett

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David F Barrett - Resume

- 1/3 owner of Barrett Lumber Company. Secretary/Woodlands manager.
- Started running dozer when I was 8 years old.
- Started at 10 years old on Saturdays, holidays and summer vacations to work at the sawmill.
- At 12 years old started to work in the woods with the dozer.
- At 16 after finishing high school, valedictorian and head of the class, I started to work full time with my father in forestry.
- At age 72 I am still working in forestry.
- past president of Wood Manufacturing Association of Nova Scotia.
- Past president of Chebucto Track & Field Association.
- On the Board of Directors of FPANS for over 30 years, 10 years as Treasurer.
- Volunteer fireman for 10 years (Sackville and District Fire Department).
- Three Children:
 - Robin Barrett - President of Barrett Enterprises Limited - a forest harvesting, fuel wood chipping and firewood manufacturer.
 - Dr. Mary Jeanne Barrett - Professor of Education, University of Saskatoon.
 - Dr. James H. Barrett - Professor of Archaeology, University of Cambridge, England.
- Comment from Hugh - That "Damn" David is always right!

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I

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March 21, 2011

"The Law of Unintended Consequences"

The concept has long existed but was named and popularized in the 20th century by the American sociologist, Robert K. Merton.

I draw attention to this concept as it specifically pertains to the enactment of various government regulations.

Of course one must expect all regulations to have unintended consequences; the issue is whether regulators understand a situation well enough to improve it via imperfect regulations. A reasonable guess is that no regulation is on average better than another, but that savvy regulators expect that the public expects them to "do something".

This is an open letter to Provincial, Federal, and Municipal politicians in the Province of Nova Scotia. My name is David Barrett, one of the principal owners of Barrett Lumber Company Limited in operation since 1926. Together with my two brothers we have a combined experience of over 168 years in forestry. The following are "personal" views of how our governments have "built the coffin, dug the grave, and now are preparing to bury forestry in Nova Scotia". At the same time, it is my personal view that successive governments in this province are perpetuating the largest Government land grab since the "Expulsion of the Acadians".

I am most sincere in my expression of these views and if you take the time to read and digest my comments you will find that I am passionate about our past, our present, and most importantly about our collective future. I harbour no malice toward any person who has been, is now, or will be in the future, connected with government either as a politician or as a bureaucrat. My sole intent is to heighten awareness of the very slippery slope on which we collectively tread and in so doing to encourage corrective measures to prevent and almost certain calamity on the primary industries in Nova Scotia, which are the "backbone" of our sustainability.

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- CANADIAN WOOD TRUSS ASSOCIATION (C.W.T.A.)
- ~~CONFEDERATION OF LUMBER INDUSTRIES~~
- CANADIAN FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (CFIB)
- ~~CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF LUMBER PRODUCERS~~
- CANADIAN HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION (CHBA)
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While my personal stories (which I am prepared to share if any of you are interested, at your convenience) are specifically about "Forestry". I fervently believe that like examples exist for all other sectors of our primary sectors. I refer specifically to Forestry, Agriculture, Fishing and Mining. I fully recognize that our economy is comprised of a large menu of industries and sub-industries but each are directly or indirectly connected to one or more of these primary sectors.

In the past, a bearer of bad news would be shot. I ask you to at least read this letter, which together with an overview of personal thoughts and experiences, will hopefully prevent any temptation to "tar and feather" me. For years past as well as present Governments have passed legislation and enacted regulations which collectively are destroying the Forestry Sector. This sector, together with the three others noted earlier is the "backbone of our economy". As the prime activity within these sectors takes place in rural Nova Scotia, our society is progressively destroying these localities. As noted in the opening of this communique, I suggest that this is a glowing example of the "law of unintended consequence". I respectfully suggest that these governments have little idea of the end result of these actions which have become the "law of the land". At the risk of over dramatizing I contend that this attitude or regulatory over burden is so entrenched at this time that I wonder if there is any politician in Nova Scotia with integrity, principals, and backbone to say "enough is enough". Is there any among them who will work against the brainstorming that the environmental movement, with which the media has acquiesced, is succeeding?

Sincerely,

David F Barrett

David F. Barrett

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II

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March 14, 2011

Open Letter to;
The Honorable Darrell Dexter, Premiere of Nova Scotia
The Honorable Stephen McNeil, Leader of the Opposition
The Honorable Jamie Baillie, Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party
Your Worship Mayor Peter Kelly

"The Law of Unintended Consequences" – (attached)

Personal views of David F Barrett of how our governments have, built the coffin, dug the grave and are preparing to bury Forestry in Nova Scotia, while at the same time perpetuating the largest government land grab since the "Expulsion of the Acadians."

Dear Sirs,

I write this letter with deep regret and I know it is a waste of time and it will likely be thrown into the trash, for all governments both past and present, have gone so far down the road to destroying forestry in Nova Scotia. I believe both past and present governments have no idea what the result would be of the laws they were passing. It would take a decisive Premiere with the help of the opposition to stop this destruction. During the last 30 years, consecutive Nova Scotian governments, with the help of city dwellers and the environmental movement have been destroying forestry in Nova Scotia.

The Land Grab

In the 60's we had "the me generation" now we have "the entitlement generation." I feel Nova Scotians in the majority, feel they are entitled with the help of our governments to, legally steel forest land and by doing so are destroying the forestry industry and rural Nova Scotia. They are doing this by;

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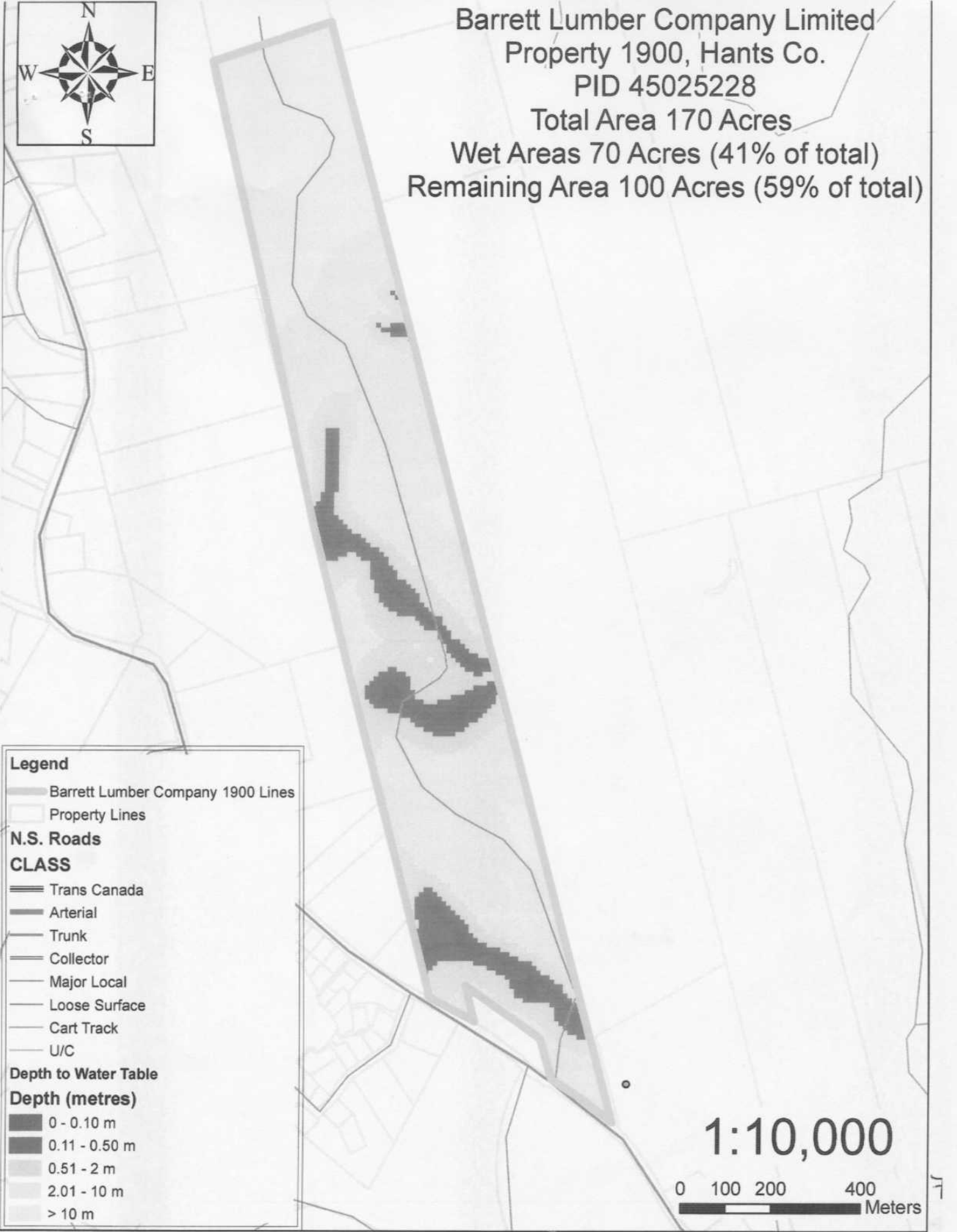
- A. Reperion zone laws
- B. Proposed wetland laws
- C. Species at risk laws
- D. Plants at risk laws
- E. Migratory bird laws
- F. Municipal zoning laws
- G. Leaving timber to blow down on harvesting areas, even when it's been protected by families for 150 years. This timber could be used to support rural industry. And all this with no compensation to the forest land owner and, at the same time making a large acreage of adjacent timber uneconomical to harvest because this forest land is cut up so badly by all these laws.
- H. If you let a beaver dam your land the Department of Environment then claims it as a wetland and indirectly steals it.
- I. If you direct the flow of ditches on forest fiber extraction roads through vegetation so as to filter out any silt, over time the Department of Environment claims the drainage area a wetland.
- J. View plain regulations
- K. Danger in the workplace laws.

It is my view that if all the land grabs and the protected areas are totaled up, 50% of Nova Scotia's forests will be taken out of production thereby destroying 50% of rural employment and rural wealth. In fact I believe that if the wetland regulations are passed as proposed there will be many private woodlots where over 50% of their woodland will not be economically harvestable.



Barrett Lumber Company Limited
Property 1900, Hants Co.
PID 45025228
Total Area 170 Acres

Wet Areas 70 Acres (41% of total)
Remaining Area 100 Acres (59% of total)



Legend

- Barrett Lumber Company 1900 Lines
- Property Lines

N.S. Roads

CLASS

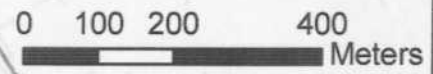
- Trans Canada
- Arterial
- Trunk
- Collector
- Major Local
- Loose Surface
- Cart Track
- U/C

Depth to Water Table

Depth (metres)

- 0 - 0.10 m
- 0.11 - 0.50 m
- 0.51 - 2 m
- 2.01 - 10 m
- > 10 m

1:10,000



Costs

Another way that forestry is being destroyed in Nova Scotia is costs.

Examples:

1. Downloading \$17 per thousand silviculture costs on saw mills (the only place in the world). This downloading cost BLC over 1/4 of a million dollars. Sawmills in Nova Scotia are either going bankrupt, shutting down or being fed with government money like Sydney Steel. I feel that under present government policies the only wood processing industries that will operate in the future will be government subsidized. **(It's happening now)**
2. Extra fees, every time you turn around there's more.
3. Training costs. Example: to hire a person for one day with a chain saw in the woods, here are just a few of the things we have to do:
 - A. Provide 3 days chain saw training with a Department of Labour instructor (can't do it in-house, like we used to), 6 person days.
 - B. Provide 2 days first aid training, 4 person days.
 - C. 1/2 days WHIMIS training, 1 person day.
 - D. Provide comprehensive orientation of company policies, 1/2 day worker, 1/2 day owner.
 - E. Provide 1 day training of Best Forestry Management.
 - F. Provide on the job supervision with documentation. Owner, 1 day.
 - G. Provide remote location training.
 - H. Provide risk assessment training.
 - I. Provide personal protective equipment.

Even if we did all this training, if the employee happened to get hurt or do something stupid we would still be charged and fined by the Department of Labour for unsafe work practices and advertized as an unsafe employer.

4. Extra permit costs.
5. Regulation complaint costs.
6. We had to pay \$18,500 municipal betterment charges on a 90 acre timber lot; the interest on this money is larger than the value of the annual growth of timber.
7. It seems to me that our governments would rather see forest land blown down and burnt, (like the Minesville and Spryfield forest fires. These fires not only burned large acres of forest land but also homes) rather than see the forest harvested and making rural employment.
8. Upgraded the woodland water course crossing (18" and up) to meet DOT regulations i.e. 100 years rain event - 2ft to 3ft of crush gravel under culverts. The riprap has to be imported, not local rock. In fact the environmental engineer giving the course said that not a single forestry brook crossing was in compliance in 2009. She in no way acknowledged the forestry industry couldn't afford the cost of the new forest extraction roads regulations (About the value of the timber).
9. New propane laws - Nova Scotia is the only place in Canada. (BLC - \$2,500)
10. New over width trucking laws. (BLC - \$2,000)
11. We have yet to see the new "pit regulations". If it's like anything else that comes out of the Department of Environment, the new regulations will put the final nail in the forestry coffin.
12. No end in sight on training costs. After Barrett Lumber Company spent thousands for training, national and international companies who get large government handouts then hire them away. So, I at 72 years old, have to do the work or completely go out of business. And lay off our forestry employees.
13. Violence in the workplace laws. The Department of Labour charged Barrett Lumber Company thousands of dollars because we followed their rules of 0 Tolerance of Violence in the workplace. (Department of Labour are hypocrits).

14. Danger in the workplace laws.
15. 48 hour work rule.
16. Have to have a policy of only ourselves going to advanced courses because after we spend thousands to train employees, Multi nationals with large Government support will hire them away.
17. Highway signage laws (costs \$500 for signage to unload an excavator on the side of the road).

I believe that all Governments have so brainwashed themselves into thinking they have all the answers in sustainable forestry that, by way of laws, they are destroying that which they profess to support.

Sincerely,



David F. Barrett

Cell: 452-8137

CC: Nova Scotia Members of the House of Commons.

Nova Scotia M.L.A's

NS Members, Forest Products Association of Nova Scotia

NS Members, Canadian Woodlands forum - CWF

NS Members, Maritime Lumber Bureau

Canadian Association of Family Enterprise (HFX Office) - CAFÉ

Canadian Federation of Independent Business (HFX office) - CFIB

Canadian Taxpayers Federation (HFX Office)

The Fraser Institute

National Citizens Coalition

Road Builder Association of NS

Mr. Raymond Ploudre, Ecology Action Centre

Employees of Barrett Lumber Co.

Atlantic Building Supply Dealers Association (NS Members) - ABSDA

Various NS Businesses

Media

III

HOW GOVERNMENTS ARE FORCING BARRETT LUMBER COMPANY TO QUIT HIRING, AND DOWNSIZE FROM 75 TO LESS THAN 40 EMPLOYEES.

Today the most dangerous thing BLC can do is to hire someone.

I feel that all governments don't realize that small businesses do not have to hire. Small entrepreneurs and their families can continue to run their business by just working away by themselves.

The basic principles of Barrett Lumber Company as established by my father Harold T. Barrett in 1926 have been followed for over 65 years by Dad, my brothers Keith and Hugh, and by myself, until various governments forced us to quit hiring and downsize.

The main principles were:

- A. When making a business decision, if the decision is not good for the community it is not good for the business. (The Beaver Bank Community recognized these principles by naming the Beaver Bank Junior High School and Beaver Bank Boy Scouts Camp after Dad).
- B. Provide personal service.
- C. It was our Christian duty to try to find employment for anyone with the work ethic. This principle had to be changed because of government policy.
- D. Supply quality products.
- E. Always put your profits back into the business so you can grow and provide more employment.
- F. A good businessman should get at least three returns for any move he makes and put something back into the community that makes it all possible.
- G. Waste not, want not.
- H. Pay your bills on time and live within your means.
- I. Above all provide reasonable and fair pricing.

Reasons for Downsizing

1. The Department of Labour treats employers as criminals if an employee does something stupid. (Barrett Lumber Company \$3,000) My brother Hugh has lost all of his enthusiasm to hire after being treated like a criminal for hiring.
2. New building codes cost Barrett Lumber Company \$40,000. Because of the extra costs our CEO said he could no longer make a business case of operating our sawmill.
3. New Department of Labour administration penalty laws which I believe have a flawed administration and appeal process. (Article attached)

Administrative Penalties

In January 2010, the Department of labor in Nova Scotia introduced a new fine structure. What they did was introduce an administrative penalty which would be leveled against an employer when they receive an order from the department of labor. These orders are the result of an inspection by an officer of the work site. The purpose of these penalties was to service as a deterrent for employers who did not want to comply with the regulations. But the result is that they have turned into a tax for all business. The businesses that have been the hardest hit are the small to medium business in Nova Scotia which are collectively the largest employers in Nova Scotia. There are very few employers in NS that want to hurt their employees and an extra fee / taxes are not the way to motivate NS employers. Instead it is going to force many small businesses to close due to excess of orders that result in administrative penalties.

It is reported that in the 11 month since the introduction of these penalties there have been over 820 orders written to employers with over 20 each to both supervisor and employees. The total money collected was in the neighborhood of \$500,000. There is a rumour that the departments goal was for this number to be much higher - \$750,000. This leaves business to wonder what the true motivation of the department is collect money or promote safety workplace for workers in Nova Scotia.

These penalties have not only affected the bottom line of many company during one of the worst economic down turns in recent history but it had also had the negative effect on the relationship between employer and the department of Labour. In the past employers were quiet comfortable to call on the department or the local inspector to get assistance with occupational safety concerns. These penalty have changed that relation, no employer would dare call as it would most likely result in a fine. This change in the DOL business model has left work worker in NS at risk of workplace injury because employer and employee have no where to turn.

This process has created yet another bureaucracy in the Nova Scotia Government which provides no value the business in Nova Scotia. An inspector comes on to the work site and finds a violation. As a result of that violation they write an order. This order is there forward to a separate group who is deciding the administrative penalty/tax based on the limited information they received from the officer. This group has never visited the work site and they are making this decision with the limited information that is forward by the officer. There is an appeal process that is available but it is too early in the process to see how effect it will be. But the people that in the part of this process are many times political appointee that have little or no Occupational Safety backgrounds ans we as a province are allowing them to decide the fate of many small to medium size business in NS.

Note: This letter showed up on my desk.

Up to now I didn't realize that Nova Scotians are afraid of the Nova Scotia Department of Labour

v: David F Barrett
March 11/2011

4. All businesses are guilty until proven innocent, going against hundreds of years of freedom where you were innocent until proven guilty. Besides having the power to take your license, vehicles permit etc because an employee does something stupid.
5. Riding forklift laws. My brother Hugh, who is 68 years old, had to lay off an employee because he could no longer have someone help him on the forklift.
6. Lower payload of log trucks. Stole 6,000lbs off forestry trucks - 2,000lbs off the front axle and 4,000lbs off the pup-trailers. Our two rural based wood fiber truckers informed us they are going out of business because of this 20% deduction of payload.
7. Upping property taxes in the middle of a recession. I don't understand how the assessment department can just raise the assessment by 10% during a recession.
8. Upping minimum wage in the middle of a recession. (An entitlement with no thought about if a person is worth the wage or that an employer can afford the extra.)
9. The stealing of private forest lands. "RRSP" by telling me by law I can't harvest the timber crop. I have spent my entire work life and savings in buying timberland, planting trees, harvesting timber, building forestry extraction roads etc. I am very proud of the 40 plus miles of wood roads that are used by over 2000 families for recreational purposes at no cost to the taxpayer.
If I was starting out today I wouldn't invest in forestry and if my son Robin wasn't already in forestry I would strongly recommend against it.
10. Because of all the laws in forestry the government is making Forestry in Nova Scotia a sunset industry. Forest land owners have no choice but sell their holdings for other purposes i.e. Cottage Country, Vacation Homes, to the Government etc., like Irving and Wagner.
11. Nova Scotia forest policy is forcing national and multi-national companies to move to places like Chile for forestry is a Global industry, and if Nova Scotia doesn't want them they move or don't come in the first place.
12. One of our main strengths has been our ability to innovate. Today you have to have an engineer stamp for everything we do at thousands of dollars.

It's a proven fact that anytime government takes control of a business, it destroys that business. That is what's happening to forestry in Nova Scotia.

Sincerely,

David F Barrett

David F Barrett

Jobs We Were Forced to Eliminate

1. Don't hire anyone who is accident prone or low intelligence, for if they have an accident or do something stupid the Department of Labour will treat us like criminals and with flawed administrative penalties and appeal system they will charge us thousands, and advertize Barrett Lumber Company as an unsafe employer.
2. Don't hire anyone to help on a forklift.
3. Don't hire anyone who has a temper. Charged BLC thousands (Department of Labour are hypocrits)
4. Don't hire anyone who has a drug problem.
5. Don't hire anyone who is an alcoholic.
6. Don't hire anyone who has a medical problem. Chronicle Herald article (attached) Sunday March 7, 2011 - Workers Compensation put a drug user on long term disability as it "could lead to the unsafe and illegal operation of a motor vehicle", also, a person with a medical problem because a job "could aggravate her medical problems."
7. Don't hire anyone who is illiterate.
8. Don't hire anyone who has "ADD".
9. Don't hire anyone to drive a firewood boom truck for home delivery of 8ft firewood - have to do it myself at 72 years of age.
10. I don't know why after the Legislature passes a law, the various departments gradually make the regulations so onus that the laws seem to be for job elimination, besides forcing companies to move offshore.
11. Damage done by 48 hour work rules.

Example:

A. An employee came to me before the rules and said, "David, I have a son in college and a wife in college. I need all the hours I can get". After the law was passed the employee felt I could pay him overtime because it's the law. We parted company.

B. The worst thing any employer can do is to pay an employee too much. In the end the employer will have no choice but to lay the employee off, for if the employer doesn't then the business will go bankrupt and nobody will have a job.

Sincerely,

David F Barrett

David F. Barrett

Cell:452-8137

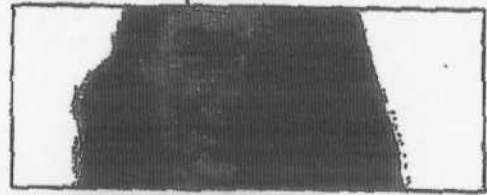
rising number of WCB decisions being overturned

Judicaster

M/S Jun March 7-2010

HOULD A doped-up, injured worker, using narcotics and medical marijuana, be forced to choose between driving a very van, or if he could get the job—being workers compensation bene-

JUST BUSINESS



RACHEL BRIGHTON

o. says the Nova Scotia Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal, which returning an increasing number of sions, not on the basis of new evidence but on plain common sense. We are still overturning quite a few of re [decisions] on common-sense principles. It seems to us, anyway," said anne Labelle, the tribunal's chief sal commissioner, said in a recent review.

the case above, the man hurt his lifting a 40-kilogram bag of salt while working at a fish plant.

Later, his request for extended benefits was denied by the Nova Scotia Workers' Compensation Board because they argued that he was qualified, and able, to get work as a full-time delivery driver.

The board's decision was overturned on appeal.

The tribunal's written decision noted the man's Grade 7 education, criminal

record and dope habit, and pointed out that his use of drugs "could lead to the unsafe and illegal operation of a motor vehicle."

The evidence also showed the man could not drive a vehicle with a standard transmission.

In another case, an injured woman with carpal tunnel syndrome and elbow and nerve problems was denied extended earnings-related benefits because her case manager decided she was able to work full time as a customer service clerk.

The appeals tribunal overturned the decision because most jobs in this field were in call centres, where the repetitive nature of working on a computer "could aggravate her medical problems."

After reading these and other cases

that had reached the appeals tribunal this year, I called Labelle to ask why so many of the board's decisions were being successfully appealed.

Last year, 45 per cent of appeals to the tribunal were successful in full or in part, up from 40 per cent in 2007 and 2008.

Apart from an apparent lack of common sense in some cases, Labelle said the time allowed for workers and employers to launch an appeal was too short to gather all the necessary facts and opinions for a sound decision.

As a result, critical evidence was being presented to the tribunal that was not available during the first stage of the process, which is conducted internally by the board's hearing officer.

See BRIGHTON / A10

BRIGHTON

continued from / A9

This was adding to the rate of successful appeals, said Labelle. A recent survey of the tribunal's caseload showed that 45 per cent of appeals were successful in full or in part, up from 40 per cent in 2007 and 2008. Labelle said the tribunal's hearing officer is not allowed to wait until they have all the necessary evidence. Mary King, a former board member, said even though a large number of decisions are overturned on appeal, only a small portion of all decisions reach the appeals tribunal. But Kingston said the board recognized the need to "improve the quality of decisions", and find ways to make the whole system "less litigious."

Rachel Brighton publishes the regional magazine Coastlines and is a former business editor and journalist.

This tells me to stop hiring anyone with Drug, Alcohol or Medical problems for WCB will treat me as a criminal and advertise me as an unsafe employer

DT Barnett

Work to carry on despite cost overruns

Council votes to finish underpass into Bayers Lake

CHAEEL LIGHTSTONE
Staff Reporter

The regional council moved a contentious road structure plan forward Tuesday despite a "calamity of errors" that led to the three-phase project being \$7 million over budget.

The 17-4 recorded vote, council decided to support completion of the Washmill Lake Court underpass in Bayers Lake Business Park.

Some councillors felt it would be "irresponsible" to re-plug now on the partly finished project, but it is to provide a third entrance to the commercial district.

The park will be expanding during the next decade and the underpass is seen as a crucial element of that plan. But a couple of councillors said they couldn't do something they viewed as philosophically inconsistent in terms of the municipality's regional plan to curb sprawling suburban sprawl.

The Halifax Regional Municipality is getting provincial and federal funds for the infrastructure job. The city's contribution is about \$3.8 million, municipal funds provide the rest.

When the cost overran, the project's bottom line is estimated at \$17 million, staff told council. The original rock excavation estimates were off the mark, and there are serious problems with pyritic slate at the



THE CHRONICLE HERALD

Underpass

continued from / A1

The construction site also helped to drive up the cost, senior staff said.

A staff report says the provincial Environment Department denied permission for the pyritic rock to be used to build a detour road, so new rock had to be brought in. This resulted in an extra cost of \$550,000, the report says.

Also, an excavation job was underestimated and an unplanned retaining wall had to be built, again adding to the cost.

"Were the estimates wrong?" Wayne Anstey, the city's acting chief administrative officer, asked rhetorically after council voted.

"Clearly, yes."

Council members alleged that the advice they received from a consultant was deficient. Even councillors who approved of the construction work proceeding said they had to hold their nose to vote yes.

"This has been a calamity of errors — we all know it," said Coun. Steve Streach (Eastern Shore-Musquodoboit Valley). "If you want a scapegoat, then let's have a public lynching or fire somebody, but let's not make the project the scapegoat."

Supporters of the third en-

trance to Bayers Lake said the municipality's reputation would suffer if it pulled out of the underpass project now, and Ottawa might treat future funding requests warily.

Councillors who opposed it proceeding were Jackie Barkhouse, Gloria McCluskey, Dawn Sloane and Jennifer Watts.

"This has been a real screw-up," McCluskey said, "so I'm not supporting it."

Watts, who represents Connaught-Quinpool and was no fan of the underpass project to start with, said there are better ways to plan for the future of the municipality with respect to sustainable transportation and livable communities.

Mayor Peter Kelly was absent because he was attending a mayors meeting in Regina.

Council met in secret earlier Tuesday to discuss the Washmill Lake Court underpass. Staff and councillors told The Chronicle Herald that no one was fired over the costly plan, and the municipality, for now, has decided not to sue anyone from the private sector linked to the project.

"Staff were given a legal opinion today, and on the basis of that, a determination was made that we wouldn't take legal action," Anstey said.

Council's endorsement means it agreed to seek an extension under the federal government's Economic Action Plan for the road project, and the politicians directed staff to come back with a funding plan for the final phase of the work.

The addition of a third entrance to Bayers Lake is "a prerequisite for continued development" in the park and to reduce traffic backlogs and congestion, a city hall release says. The underpass project was identified as a necessary component of the park's growth back in 2002, council heard.

(milightstone@herald.ca)

The Nova Scotia Department of Environment has no concept that someone has to pay the bills. Private Industry either goes Bankrupt or quits. at the rate DOE is going it's also going to bankrupt governments.

IV

Garbage brief for proposed public hearing re: HRM March 8, 2011

This public hearing was cancelled.

Garbage - March 8, 2011

Mayor Kelly, Members of HRM Council, my name is David Barrett of 2 Maplewood Court, Beaver Bank. I'm a 72 year old lifetime resident of Beaver Bank and with my brother, Hugh and Keith, we own and operate Barrett Lumber Company.

BIT OF HISTORY - Barrett Lumber Company

Dad started Barrett Lumber Company in 1926 - 85 years ago. He had strong principles which he passed onto his sons, such as:

- A. Don't ever make a business decision which isn't good for our community.
- B. It was our Christian duty to try to find employment for anyone with the work ethic.
- C. Always put your profits back into the business so you can grow and provide more employment.
- D. In fact, the community of Beaver Bank recognized Dad's principles by naming a Beaver Bank Junior High School and Beaver Bank Boy Scouts Camp after him.

CLEANING UP GARBAGE

There is one thing about getting older; you remember what it was like when there was no garbage collection.

- A. I spent many a day cleaning up garbage on our forest extraction roads.

For the last 30 years I haven't had to do this much.

I'm afraid that under your new proposal I will have to go back to square one and start all over again, cleaning up illegally dumped garbage. The only problem is under the present HRM rules, not only will I have to pay dearly for the privilege of cleaning up someone else's garbage but I will be treated as a criminal the minute I touch that garbage. (ex. A home owner was charged in the HRM for cleaning up a vacant lot next to his home.)

I ASK YOU

1. The amount of 6 green bags used every two weeks is reasonable and working. Don't force me to clean up other people's messes. re. illegally dumped garbage on our forest land.
2. Have HRM auditors look into the HRM garbage disposal contract, for it is my understanding that the cost per ton should be approximately \$65 a ton, where HRM costs are double that amount.
3. When the new budget is received take the time to read and understand it. Not like last year when you got a two inch thick budget on a Friday and passed it on a Tuesday - you didn't even know you gave yourself a raise.

RESPECT

I used to respect everyone who ran for public office - I have now lost most of that respect for them. Here are some of the reasons why:

1. Allowed bureaucrats to charge a homeowner for cleaning up a vacant lot next to their home.
2. Spend thousands of dollars to drive a homeowner out of their home.
3. In today's Chronicle Herald they are spending thousands of dollars to appeal a "ridiculous" case of a resident selling fertilizer out of his home.

IN CLOSING

In closing I would like to leave you with some thoughts. During the public participation planing committee in Sackville in the 80's, Mr Brian Grennan stated; "how many existing businesses in Sackville would ever get started under these new rules"?

I today state - "how many existing businesses in HRM will survive under all the HRM rules, fees, permits etc., including these new proposed rules for garbage bags"?

Sincerely,

David F Barrett

David F. Barrett

Cell: 452-8137

David F. Barrett
Woodlands Manager

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November 5, 2009

The Honourable Darrell Dexter, MLA
Premier of Nova Scotia
7th floor, One Government Place
1700 Granville Street
Halifax, NS B3J 2T3

RE: Survival of the Nova Scotia Forest Industry

Dear Mr. Premier:

As you know the forest industry of Nova Scotia is in a depression with a number of bankruptcies, receivership closures, and curtailments. As you also know, all wealth is produced by lumbering, farming, fishing, mining, manufacturing and export. All other employment, although very important, only shuffles the wealth that is generated by the above. And once the wealth generators are gone the Province will be bankrupt and our social network will collapse.

I don't think you want your Government to become known as the Government that completely destroyed the forest industries of Nova Scotia. I feel that if your Government enacts a Nova Scotia wetlands regulation as proposed, that would be the end result. Nova Scotia is a wet Province with every square foot of the Province containing water at various times during the year.

If you don't think this will happen, just look at the Saturday October 9, 2009 Chronicle Herald where civil servants drove Colleen Weare and her family out of their own home and onto the street. The comments I have heard about civil servants considering the end results before making interpretations of regulations and enforcing them goes against what is happening in our Province today. These rules need to work. Good intentions and optimism will not bring back companies who go bankrupt or put food on the table of people who lose their rights to harvest woodlots they counted on to fund their retirement.

Page 1 of 2

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CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY ENTERPRISE (CAFE)



If You, as myself, don't want to see the forestry industry of Nova Scotia destroyed, I strongly recommend your Government work with the Forest Products Association of Nova Scotia to come up with a workable solution. If you want further input from me please do not hesitate to call me on my cell at 452-8137.

Yours truly,

David F Barrett

David F. Barrett
Secretary, Woodlands Manager
Barrett Lumber Company
/mh

cc. The Honourable Stephen R. McNeil, E.C.N.S., MLA, Leader of the Opposition
The Honourable Karen Lynn Casey, E.C.N.S., MLA, NS Leader of the PC Party
Nova Scotia Members of the House of Commons
Nova Scotia Members of the Executive Council
Ms. Sharon Ganong, Director or NDP Caucus
Ms. Exie Sciocchetti, Liberal Secretary
Ms. Margaret Brayley, PC Caucus Secretary
Mr. Steve Talbot, Forest Products Association of Nova Scotia
Mr. Raymond Plourde, Ecology Action Centre
Media

More bad luck

Inspector says house unsafe; officials try to find place for family

By BEVERLEY WARE
South Shore Bureau

NORTH BROOKFIELD — Colleen Weare's kids have been sleeping on the floor and furniture all week and her multiple sclerosis-stricken husband slept in the car after they were ordered out of their Queens County home by the building inspector.

"I called for help and this is what I get," the distraught North Brookfield woman said Friday afternoon. "I am poor. I have four kids and a sick husband."

After a string of bad luck that included being hit by a car, which has rendered her unable to work since September, the order this week to vacate the family home was almost too much for her.



Colleen Weare stands at the bottom of the steps to her home, which was ordered vacated by a building inspector. Community Services officials said late Friday they were confident the family would soon have a place to stay.

"We have no home. Wherever we can lay down is where we sleep," Ms. Weare said, struggling to maintain her composure.

She and husband Floyd have four children, 11 to 19. They live in a house Mr. Weare built with his own hands 22 years ago.

"We raised our kids there. It needs work, I know it needs work, but it's livable. We did this on our own and we make do with what we've got," Ms. Weare said.

They have no money coming in because Ms. Weare was hit by a car Sept. 10 and is unable to do her job at the nursing home in nearby Caledonia. She had contacted the Department of Community Services district office in Liverpool to see if it could be of any help to her family.

On Monday morning, she went to Bridgewater for physiotherapy on her injured left leg and returned home to "a yard full of by-law officers taking pictures of my house. I started crying. I asked them, 'What's going on?' And he told us it's not fit to stay in."

Ms. Weare said she knew the stovepipe needed work, and they had just bought a used chimney flue, but she was also told the electrical work is not up to date and there are a series of other safety issues with the house, including the rotting deck.

"It's hard to get these things when you have no money," she said.

According to Ms. Weare, the officials told her, "We're not here to hurt you, we're here to help you." But she said she certainly didn't feel that when they told her the two youngest children could not stay in the house that night.

She contacted her mother, who lives in a small home two doors away and who agreed to take them for the night. But the next day, Ms. Weare returned home from physiotherapy to find a note stuck to her door ordering the premises vacated under the provincial Fire Safety Act.

The order is signed by fire and building inspector Bill Leighton. He could not be reached for comment late in the day Friday.

"All our stuff is in there, the kids' clothes, their toothbrushes, and we're not allowed to set foot in there until we get all these things fixed. I started bawling and crying. I thought, 'Where do I go now? Where do you put up six people?'"

She said she was allowed in, under Mr. Leighton's supervision, to get some clean clothes and necessities.

"I know it needs work, but it's not going to fall down on us. Why would they kick us out before we could find anywhere to live?"

Her mother, Bonnie Mailman, took the whole family in, but there's no room. Nick, 11, and Jason, 13, sleep on the loveseat and chesterfield. Penny, 17, sleeps on the floor in her grandmother's

(BEVERLEY WARE / South Shore Bureau)

room. Theodore, 19, sleeps in a twin bed in a spare room because he works at a lumber mill and needs rest. Ms. Weare sleeps in the bed she had as a little girl, and her husband sleeps in the car.

"It's terrible for me and Floyd. We've worked all our lives and now he can't provide for his family. What are we going to do?"

Three Community Services officials in Liverpool told her they have been working night and day to try to find the family somewhere to live. It seemed late Friday those efforts might have paid off. Ms. Weare was told there may be an apartment for them in Caledonia, but she wasn't sure she could afford the \$350 a month in rent.

While she had no confirmation of that apartment by Friday evening, Department of Community Services spokeswoman Linda Laffin said she believed the family would have a unit by nightfall.

"The good news is they have a place to go," she said.

Ms. Laffin said the department does help people like the Weares with emergency financial support and housing assistance. There is a waiting list for such programs, but those in dire need are quickly moved up, she said.

"In a crisis, the Department of Community Services will step in and help," she said.

(bware@herald.ca)

David F. Barrett
Woodlands Manager

② 452-8137



Hugh A. Barrett
Mill Manager

Keith H.W. Barrett
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POINTS

- During the 60's, 70's, 80's and early 90's I spoke at the law amendments committee numerous times. I told them they were giving the bureaucrats too much power. The MLA's said common sense would prevail. Where is that common sense?
- when the law says a private land owner with timber in the family for 150 years has to leave 36% of his land to blow down.
- when the Department of Labour dismisses appeals because they are not on their desks by 21 days.
- when the Department of Labour decides fines behind closed doors without any input from those being charged. Fining and treating employers like criminals for hiring. (Even criminals are innocent until proven guilty.)
- when a Department of Labour inspector says people in rural areas look at him as if he has two heads when he tells them of all the safety laws they have to follow.
- when HRM drives a homeowner out of their home.

Yours truly,

David F. Barrett

MEMBER OF

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OTHER VIEWS AND CONCERNS

A person driving through a national park threw a lit cigarette out of the car window on a hot summer's day. This cigarette caused a large forest fire which destroyed hundreds of acres of the park. The next day when this person read about the big fire he said to his wife, "We were very lucky to have seen the park before it was destroyed".

I feel Nova Scotia politicians are the same as this person. They have very little idea of cause and effect.

1. "Our economy has to go through a great depression every 75 to 100 years so the majority of the people understand the facts of economics." (Harold Campbell - 1967)
2. "All democracies eventually tend to grow until they choke the economics that pay for them." (The Economist - July 10, 2010)
3. Ireland's debt is 14.4 percent of the gross domestic product while Nova Scotia's debt is 40 percent of the gross domestic product. (The Chronicle Herald - 2010, article attached)
4. As stated by Brian Grennan at a Sackville planning committee in the 1980's, "How many existing businesses in Sackville would have ever got started if they had to follow these new rules?"
5. I am stating February 11, 2011 "How many established small, medium and large businesses are going to be driven out of businesses or out of Nova Scotia by all the laws, regulations, extra fees, fines, taxes, permits and board adjudicators etc, we have today?"
6. 55% of Nova Scotia's total economy is government spending. (Chronicle Herald March 18, 2011, article attached)

Yours truly,

David F. Barrett
David F. Barrett

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Williams' departure leaves a power gap on the East Coast

C/H

The tides are changing in East Coast politics and after all that came in with the flood, it's a guess as to what will flow out with the ebb.

On Friday, Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams will officially step down, upending politics in his province but also disturbing the waters further west, in the Maritimes. That's inevitable, despite the suspicious distance that is traditional between the regions and the rarity of true co-operation.

But developments over the past few years, from the Atlantic accords fight with Ottawa to the grand scheme to dam the Lower Churchill, have provided plenty of motivation to work better together. Much of that motivation came from Williams.

The contrasts were stark. In an era of quiet Maritime politics and understated leaders such as John Hamm, Bernard Lord, Robert Ghiz and Darrell Dexter, Williams became the East Coast mouthpiece by default. He was



DAN LEGER

the only one making waves.

Williams' successes would seem to ensure his successor will ride his coattails into office in the next Newfoundland election. But there's no replacing Danny Williams. So what does his departure mean for regional politics?

First, it could signal a ceasefire in the rhetorical and political wars with Ottawa. The new Newfoundland premier will take pages from the combative Williams' playbook, but almost certainly will moderate its tone.

So the strategy will remain in place, even if the tactics change. Newfoundlanders feel their province has finally arrived as a dynamic player in the Canadian scene and they are not going to

walk away from that just because their fearless leader has retired.

Williams' retirement could mean, as my colleague Andrew Waugh has suggested, that the Lower Churchill power project will move ahead more smoothly. Federal Ottawa might find compromise and collaboration easier with almost anyone rather than the bombastic Williams.

In fact, Danny's departure might cause a general cessation of hostilities with Ottawa. It's likely a federal election will happen in the spring, before the Newfoundland election next fall. So it's in Prime Minister Harper's interests to make peace with the new leader, because peace will improve Tory electoral chances in that province.

Going forward, Williams' retirement leaves a gaping hole in East Coast politics. His histrionics made every other regional politician look tame, if not boring. More importantly, he was successful in elevating regional issues, like the Atlantic accord

and the Labrador power deal, into national causes.

It also means there's a far less experienced cohort of Atlantic premiers left to counterbalance federal influence. After Dec. 3, the dean of Atlantic premiers will be P.E.I.'s Robert Ghiz, elected in May 2007. Even Ghiz himself would not claim great influence on the national stage.

It's also possible Peter MacKay will leave politics before the next election. If that happens, the two towering figures in regional politics will have left the building, with unpredictable effects.

This isn't the best time for a power gap to appear in regional politics. David Alward has only been premier of New Brunswick for a few weeks and Darrell Dexter leads the region's first and only NDP government, itself less than two years old. With a newbie coming to power in Newfoundland, no Easterner has any claim to regional leadership.

And there's much at stake. All governments in the region are

gasping under straining levels of debt. In P.E.I., it equals 35 per cent of the total economy. In New Brunswick, it's more than 27 per cent. In Nova Scotia, it's a whopping 40 per cent.

To put that in perspective, Ireland is said to be almost bankrupt and its debt is only 14.4 per cent of gross domestic product.

All the Maritime governments say they have debt-fighting plans, but there's little real appetite for the fight. Federal money makes provincial budget-making less painful. But now Ottawa is facing big deficits and moving from an anti-recession spending mode into one of restraint.

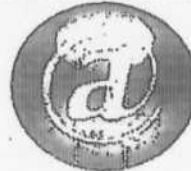
That will put the squeeze on Atlantic decision-makers, who will struggle to balance their books if Ottawa makes cuts in those all-important federal transfers.

Dan Leger is director of news content for *The Chronicle Herald*. The views expressed here are his own. (dleger@herald.ca)

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Clearwater weighs in on budget

Training, taxes top seafood giant's priorities for Ottawa

By **BRUCE BRISKINE**
Business Reporter

Training and taxes are top federal budget issues for Nova Scotia shellfish giant Clearwater Seafoods Ltd.

"We have a lot of employees in Atlantic Canada," Tyrone Cottle, Clearwater's director of corporate finance, said in a recent interview.

"Any programs to support training versus increases in payroll taxes, those are things that support Atlantic Canadian businesses."

Ottawa will table a budget with an estimated \$40-billion deficit on March 22 that includes corporate tax cuts that could trigger an election.

Clearwater, Canada's largest publicly traded shellfish company with 1,300 employees in the region, is a member of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

The federation, which represents more than 5,200 businesses in Nova Scotia, shares Clearwater's federal budget priorities.

"Those are bang on," Leanne Hachey, the federation's Atlantic vice-president, said Wednesday.

'Any programs to support training versus increases in payroll taxes, those are things that support Atlantic Canadian businesses.'

Hachey said the politically charged environment in Ottawa makes it difficult to gauge what the federal budget may mean to Nova Scotia businesses.

But she suggested that business would benefit from a federal training tax credit similar to one offered in the 1990s. That credit gave companies a one-year holiday on employment insurance premiums for new hires.

Payroll taxes for EI and the Canada Pension Plan can discourage businesses from hiring, she said. "They are considered job killers. They are not a reflection of profitability."

Hachey said federal corporate tax cuts are geared more toward large businesses and won't have as much impact in Nova Scotia as they would elsewhere.

But she said the relative level of corporate tax rates for large and small businesses should be maintained, which would mean low-

ering the small business tax rate over time.

Todd King, a tax partner with Deloitte in Halifax, said the corporate tax cuts make "perfect sense" in keeping Canada competitive globally.

But King suggested that Ottawa could introduce angel investor tax credits, such as now exist in Nova Scotia, to help startup companies. "There is no federal counterpart."

He said he would also like to see Nova Scotia follow federal tax reductions that other provinces have implemented.

"There's quite a disparity."

Low provincial tax rates in places such as Alberta are a magnet for skilled and talented people, King said.

The federation released a study Wednesday calling on all levels of government to rein in spending.

Restraint is particularly important in Nova Scotia, where combined federal, provincial and



Clearwater Seafoods is hoping the upcoming budget contains programs for training.

(ERIC WYNNE / Staff)

municipal government spending accounts for more than 55 per cent of the total economy, Hachey said.

"Nova Scotia is more government dependent than any other developed country," including France, Italy, Spain and Ireland, she said.

That dependency could hurt the province down the road, Hachey said, since Nova Scotia's population is aging, its population growth is stagnant and federal transfer payments to the province are up for renegotiation in 2012.

The federation recommends that all governments implement ironclad, long-term legislation to control expenditures.

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Examples of how Nova Scotia laws are going "Too Far"

1. Twenty years ago when a single senior asked for help to remove a heavy snow load on her roof, Barrett Lumber Company sent an employee to do it. This winter when the same lady asked again, we had to tell her we couldn't because of the laws. When she asked the Beaver Bank Lions Club she got the same answer. My 76 year old brother did it because under NS laws Barrett Lumber Company would be charged as a criminal if we sent an employee to do it.
2. When I spoke to a Department of Labour inspector about how this department is destroying jobs in rural Nova Scotia he made this comment, "When I explain to rural employers the labour laws they have to follow, they look at me as if I have two heads."
3. During the last 30 years we have trained approximately 16 heavy equipment and light truck and car operators. The apprentice, after four years of training, can only get their Heavy Equipment ticket thereby eliminating them from rural employment as there is not enough work without both tickets. Even though it's the same training for both. To get both tickets they would have to take an additional four years as an apprentice.
4. Is it the government's policy to ignore small businesses? (Chronicle Herald - April 10, 2010 article attached.)

If it's Nova Scotia Government policy to destroy forestry and small business in NS say so. Don't be hypocrits, saying one thing and doing another.

Yours truly,

David F. Barrett

MEMBER OF

- MARITIME LUMBER BUREAU (MLB)
- NOVA SCOTIA FOREST PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION (NSFPA)
- WOOD PRODUCTS MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA (WPMANS)
- ATLANTIC BUILDING SUPPLY DEALERS ASSOCIATION (ABSDA)
- ATLANTIC WOOD TRUSS FABRICATORS ASSOCIATION (AWTFA)
- CANADIAN WOOD TRUSS ASSOCIATION (C.W.T.A.)
- ~~CANADIAN WOOD TRUSS ASSOCIATION (C.W.T.A.)~~
- CANADIAN FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (CFIB)
- ~~CANADIAN FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (CFIB)~~
- CANADIAN HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION (CHBA)
- CANADIAN WOODLANDS FORUM (CWF)
- CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY ENTERPRISE (CAFE)



ECONOMIC COUNCIL LACKS SMALL-BUSINESS VOICE

m/5

April 10

The opposition parties are howling over several union leader appointments and their potential conflicts in serving on Premier Darrell Dexter's new economic advisory council.

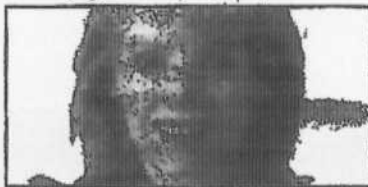
They also may want to look at who's missing.

Could Dexter not find one single independent small-business soul in this province who could voice a meaningful, conflict-free piece of advice about how to expand the economy?

The council, named Tuesday, is mandated to provide the premier with ideas on moving the province forward with strong economic growth. Where, then, is the representation for small business, which accounts for 91.7 per cent of all businesses in the province, roughly 30 per cent of all employees and more than one-third of total business payrolls?

The 21-member council has seven union leaders or lawyers, eight community representatives from such groups as the Ecology Action Centre in Halifax, a women's centre in Lunenburg and the Nova Scotia Community College, and six business voices.

The business representatives include such well-known names as Joe Shannon of Shannex, Jim Spatz of Southwest Properties,



MARILLA STEPHENSON

Michael Donovan of DHX Media, Jean-Paul Deveau of Acadian Seaplants and Valerie Payn, president of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce. The co-chairman is Robert Patzelt, a Halifax lawyer who works with Jodrey-controlled Scotia Investments.

All lovely people. But excluding Payn, who among this corporate group has not benefited significantly from government loans and/or spending in such areas as, for example, nursing homes, the film industry or office space leases?

Acadian Seaplants, for instance, received a \$250,000 loan from the province in 2009 and roughly \$1 million from federal programs over the past few years. It employs 300,000 people in eight facilities around the province. Deveau is also chairman of the 2011 Canada Games.

Where, exactly, might one find a voice independent from government largesse among this mem-

bership? Payn, from a chamber that represents large and small businesses in Halifax, cannot be expected to carry the ball all by herself.

Where is the small-business operator who struggles to pay taxes year after year while dealing with mountains of government-related paperwork, workers' compensation contributions and steady increases in the minimum wage?

I caught up with Dexter to ask him about the new council, which will meet three times a year. Members will not be paid but may claim expenses. The council was recommended by the panel Dexter struck last summer to advise him on how to balance the province's books.

"I find that, many times, the harshest critics you have are actually the people you'll deal with on other files and even on loan files, so I think the makeup of the panel is a good one," said Dexter.

"The chamber represents many, many small businesses, in Halifax, sure. But if you look at J.P. Deveau, Acadian Seaplants, or if you look at Jim Spatz, all these people, they may be larger than a corner operation, but they aren't the big corporate entities, either."

Much has already been made of

the high numbers of union representation on the council. Joan Jessome, Ray Larkin, Danny Cavanagh, Les Holloway and Rick Clarke — well known as strong voices for organized labour — are among the members. No problem with union voices, as they are part of the total economic picture in this province.

But unionized labour, according to the Labour and Workforce Development Department, accounts for just 25 per cent of the total provincial workforce. Most of those jobs are within government or in sectors such as universities and municipalities who receive significant government funding.

I wondered if perhaps some small-business folks had been invited to join the council but declined.

"I think we had a surplus," said Dexter. "We had people who called in and said, 'I understand you're going to have an economic council, I'd like to be part of it.'"

So who on this panel can really afford to offend the government with advice that will go against the grain of government subsidies or a left-leaning, big-spending agenda?

Good luck finding that sort of balance on this council.

(mstephenson@herald.ca)

C/A March 18/11 - NS: Federal, Provincial - merged regarding
= more than 55% of our total economy

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April 26, 2011

Dear Customers:

I wish to thank all our customers both new and long term for buying 8 foot firewood from us. It is with regret that I must inform you that as of August 1, 2011 we will no longer be delivering 8 foot firewood for the following reasons:

1. It is too dangerous to hire anyone to deliver 8 foot firewood to homeowners
 - a. As you may or may not know, in the early 1990's Barrett Lumber Company was charged thousands of dollars, treated as criminals and advertised as an unsafe employer by the Nova Scotia Department of Labour because one of our employees touched a wire when he forgot to retract the boom while placing the boom back onto the truck. (I am still angry about these unjust charges). Nobody would have known about the employee's mistake if we hadn't followed the law and reported the accident.
 - b. For almost 20 years now, I have personally delivered the 8 foot firewood because it was too dangerous for me to hire an employee to do it. If an employee happened to touch a wire he would say "the boss sent me". I then, as an employer, would be charged thousands of dollars and once again would be treated and advertised as a criminal.
2. This year our Nova Scotia government decided to take 2,000 pounds off the weight I can carry on our 8 foot firewood delivery truck. This reduction would force me to haul uneconomical loads to you.
3. At 73 years of age and because it is too dangerous to employ anyone, I see no economic sense to buy a tandum truck with a double front end to meet the new government standards.

My son, Robin Barrett, produces and delivers 15 ½" cut and split firewood in three diameters - small-medium is 3" to 6", medium is 5" to 7" and medium-large is 5" to 10" and Barrett Firewood guarantees 128 cubic feet per cord, measured after it is cut and split. Robin has agreed to give a 5% discount to anyone who orders six cords of cut and split firewood.

À Comparison Between 8' Firewood and Cut and Split Firewood:

- Measurement Canada considers cords to be measured in the form they are delivered in. When you cut and split 8 foot firewood, you see a shrinkage of 20% to 30% due to tighter piling, sawdust and bark.
- When Robin did a comparison of 8 foot scaled firewood purchased from Northern Pulp he found that it took 26% more 8 foot firewood to make a full cord of cut and split.
- The end result was that it takes approximately 8 cords of legally scaled 8 foot firewood to make six full cords of legally scaled cut and split firewood. By the same comparison, over 7 cords of 8 foot firewood produces a minimum of 5 1/4 cords of cut and split firewood.

It has been a pleasure to have done business with you and I wish you the best in the future.

Yours sincerely,

David F Barrett

David F. Barrett
Barrett Firewood