

Good afternoon.

My name is Jane MacKay --- citizen, educator, business owner.

In the course of our business we have designed and developed educational and resource material for entrepreneurial start-ups and provided coaching and counselling and assistance in business plan writing to approximately 1,000 businesses.

There is not enough time here to go into the number of stories we have heard about bureaucratic and attitudinal barriers to starting businesses in this Province.

Let me say that the image one builds with business owners or customers is cumulative. And I have heard enough to believe that the tipping point is coming here; that the not open for business sign is on the door.

If anyone here heard Ken Rowe's remarks yesterday morning you know that I am not alone in thinking this.

In my work and community activities here are some examples of what I see and hear:

- the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia has the longest application process for out of Province, already licensed and currently working RN's, of any in the country. I know of one nurse, for example, who was working in another province and four months after moving to NS still had not managed to become licensed here.
- Dental hygienists moving here from out of province face the same challenges.
- A TSE listed, perhaps the largest, heavy metal exploration company spends a million dollars annually in Eastern Canada on summer prospecting activities. They do not come to Nova Scotia. They are quoted to me as saying New Brunswick and Newfoundland say what can we do to help and Nova Scotia says here is what we are going to do to you.
- Our son is a 30 something pursuing a successful career in Seattle WA. He and his friends, who are also working elsewhere and some of whom have returned here think Nova Scotia is the most difficult place in the country to try to get anything done for a start up business.
- The Federal Government currently has a moratorium on the issuing of oyster growing leases in Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia oyster farmers, unlike lobster fishers, can sell everything they can grow. Oysters, unlike salmon, clean the marine environment. I am not aware that the Provincial Government is doing anything to correct this

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economically damaging policy. Some applicants for oyster leases have, I am told, been in the process for as long as seven years.

- If I register a business in BC, Alberta or Saskatchewan it is automatically registered in the other two provinces. I recently spoke with a manager of a NB registered business who is trying to do business throughout Atlantic Canada. He says the cost of operating and managing red tape in the four Atlantic Provinces is financially and mentally draining.

The point is there is not much doubt we have a reputation of being a very difficult place to do business or get qualifications recognised and my experience is it is deserved. It is interesting to note that Seattle, WA, where I mentioned my son lives, has no state income tax and the sales tax is a little under 10%.

It is the home of Amazon, Google, Microsoft, Starbucks, Celestial Seasonings Tea.....

We cannot in my or your lifetimes aspire to zero provincial income tax. However we can adopt policies which let aspiring start-ups and established businesses know we are interested in helping them get established here.

We can hang out a BIG open for business sign.

Lest anyone thinks I am unconcerned about potential hazards of resource extraction I would like to quote from Dean Jobb's book about the disaster that was Westray. (Page 169)

The Nova Scotia Government's website states:

Most issues attributed to hydraulic fracturing have been traced back to poor drilling practices rather than the fracture operation itself.

Nova Scotia has rules and regulations designed to protect against poor drilling practices.

Since the commercial application of hydraulic fracturing in the late 1940s, more than a million wellbores have been drilled and stimulated using hydraulic fracturing.

The ban on fracturing proposed by the government in this bill suggests to the world (a lot of Pictorians already believe it) that we are incapable of developing safe, enforceable regulations for resource industries. Or if we are it will take years to do so. In this world to be successful is to be nimble.

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Ray Ivany's report speaks to changing attitudes in Nova Scotia as a key ingredient to changing our economic fortunes.

As we speak the opening ceremony for the International Slow Food Annual Conference in Turin Italy is probably concluding. There are at least five delegates from Nova Scotia there. I am willing to bet none of them are free range chicken growers or small turkey processors.

We need the government to be leaders in this change of attitude not the last person turning out the lights. Please consider the message being sent to the rest of the country with Bill 6 - Petroleum Resources Act (amended) An Act to Amend Chapter 342 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Petroleum Resources Act

In closing I would like to add my voice to those Nova Scotians who believe it is hypocritical to take the gas generated by fracturing in other Provinces and ban it here.

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