

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** Katharina Jost [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** April 11, 2022 5:23 PM  
**To:** Premier; Finance Minister; Minister, DMA; Minister of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage;  
Economic Development Minister; Justice Minister; Office of the Legislative Counsel;  
susancorkumgreekmla@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Letter

**\*\* EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE \*\***

Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking on links / Faites preuve de prudence si vous ouvrez une pièce jointe ou cliquez sur un lien

To

Premier Tim Houston

Ministers of Finance, Justice, Tourism, Economic Development, Municipal Affairs and Housing and our MLA  
Law Amendments Committee (LAC)

from

Katharina and Ralph Jost

Second Peninsula

[REDACTED]

Second Peninsula, April 11, 2022

Honorable Premier and honorable Ministers, honorable Members of the LAC

### **The proposed new property tax law**

We do have a problem, we do have a housing crisis. That's where we agree.

With one big stroke you want to try and remedy that, a new tax law for out of province and foreign homeowners.

Just like Dexter did with the cancelling of the CAT ferry (big mistake)

like McNeill did with the film tax credit (big mistake)

you want to do this early in your term, a bold popular brushstroke, but really, just a big mistake too.

So far, I liked the seriousness and the respect with which your government worked, and I also liked the speed. Until now we thought we had the best politics in years. But now this!

We do have a huge problem with houses sitting empty for most of the year, being rented 8 weeks in July and August over Airbnb and other portals. The owners make a nice profit and can afford to let the houses empty. In the same time they push licensed vacation businesses out of business, because not the same rules apply. The so called sharing economy is completely unregulated, they don't pay business taxes, they don't have business insurance or a license, the province has no possibility to ensure quality standards, the houses are not available for permanent residents and the property prices go sky high, because it is a good investment.

In towns like our beautiful Lunenburg, the residents are the staffers in a fairy tale called „quaint, colourful fishing town“, and have to maintain infrastructure, culture, beauty, life.

Tourism is not a bad thing and it provides many workplaces and incomes. Tourists with homes here stay usually a long time, many of those from abroad stay 6 months and contribute to society.

But if the ratio short term tourists / residents gets out of balance, society suffers.

**There is a handle. Why don't you tackle this problem?**

Speculation is an other big problem. In our neighbourhood on beautiful Second Peninsula, an almost 200 year old Farmhouse was recently bought by an affluent couple from Halifax. They now own 5 houses between Tantallon and Second Peninsula and seemingly some more elsewhere. They keep them, rent them out on short term basis and when they get tired of it, they sell for a much higher price.

An other gentleman, just one km down from us, already owns two houses and is just now buying a third one. The houses get rented on weekends to big partying groups and sit empty most of the time.

Some big acreage was sold and will probably be developed into a subdivision, earning this Nova Scotia couple a very high profit

and it goes on and on....

This are all works of Nova Scotia residents.

**So, if your law comes to pass, it will not touch this homegrown speculation.** Which is understandable, those might be your voters.

The threat of the proposed law works. We already know of two homeowners from overseas who will sell. They both would have liked to move here permanently, but they don't qualify for immigration. So they made do with 6 months here, being really valuable members of our society, volunteering and all. Their houses won't sell cheap, certainly not for a price a young working couple with children can pay.

So it is still not a solution to the problem.

Affordable housing would be a solution. But if the government is not willing to invest the new tax revenue into affordable housing, nothing will happen. As long as all housing is privatized and left to developers, as long as there has to be a big return of investments and a payout to shareholders, there is no solution for the housing problem of the middle and lower income class.

Please Premier Tim Houston and Ministers, do not go this very populist and cheap route. Retract the proposed law, think again and start with some better regulations, which really tackle the problems.

With kind regards and best wishes

Katharina and Ralph Jost

retired business owners,

immigrants, Canadian citizens for almost a quarter of a century