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Sent: April 12, 2022 9:57 PM
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Subject: Non-Resident Tax Proposal

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

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Good day,

I would like to start off by saying that "Seasonal Resident" is a more appropriate term to use for the group you have targeted because the term Non-Resident is typically used to talk about individuals from foreign countries. Seasonal residents in this province are largely, but not entirely, Nova Scotians born and raised in the province and who moved out for a variety of reasons, most commonly work related. They still consider themselves as Nova Scotians, and the province as home. Most still have family living in Nova Scotia and come "home" each year to be with them. Many were considering returning to the province to live out their retirement.

We agree that affordable housing supply is an issue across Canada - as evidenced by the multi-billion dollar plan to address it in the recent federal budget. But clearly this bill 149 - which was presented as Nova Scotia's policy for solving the housing problem - will not do anything of the sort. At least no one has been able to provide any analytics, data, and/or modelling to explain how it will improve on the availability of housing. What about the consequences and collateral damage of the proposal ... are these understood?

Do you understand the major risk to the rural communities who rely on seasonal residents for revenues ... and survival. Traffic and spending will decline, businesses will close and the exodus will start, and then continue. Retail, restaurants, construction, entertainment and much more will all suffer.

Do you know what is going to happen to the municipal property tax base in rural communities when property values drop because existing seasonal residents move out and sell their homes?

Have you studied how charities and community groups, particularly in rural settings, will be negatively impacted as contributions decline. Seasonal residents who do stay will look to cut other expenditures and discretionary spending, like charitable contributions in order to pay their tax bills. The money to pay these punitive and discriminatory taxes will have to come from somewhere.

And so let's call the present version of this proposal what it really is - a money grab to have non-voting taxpayers pay even more. It is an easy political call given the people you are hurting initially do not have a vote.

And surely you have already seen how this will harm the image of Nova Scotia – is this not supposed to be Canada's Ocean Playground? Many of the recent submissions by seasonal residents have touched on this. Why would people want to come to Nova Scotia, invest in Nova Scotia, if they are made to feel unwanted and abused?

Like so many others who have shared their long history this past week, here is our personal story... Nora, my wife, was born and raised in Halifax. Her mother was from a long standing Haligonian family. When Nora's father was promoted in the government, the family moved to Ottawa. But they kept their cottage in Hubbard's, which was in fact the very first

cottage built in Hubbard's in the early 1900's, in order to be able to return each year - and each year they did!

When Nora and I were looking to where we would want to spend our retirement we bought land in Chester, to be near family in a beautiful and vibrant community.

In doing this, we did not take property away from local residents (a supposed complaint). Our vacant land had sat on the market – and never had a home on it before ours. And when and if we sell, because of this tax grab, it surely won't open up housing for your target group.

Did we support the local community? We sure did. We bought the land, paid those taxes, hired a local architect from St. Margaret's Bay, a builder from Chester Basin, landscapers from Bridgewater and Hubbard's, a wharf builder from St. Margaret's Bay. We bought appliances from Halifax, and furniture from local artisans and stores from Dartmouth to Shelburne. That was ten years ago. Every year we hire great local people to take care of the house, gardens, grass, snow, doing repairs and more. We buy our food at local stores and farmers markets. We pay high property taxes already. On top of that, as Canadians, a portion of our federal income taxes go back to Nova Scotia through equalization payments. And we do not consume your health care, your schools, your social services, etc..

Our children both consider Nova Scotia to be home. Our daughter moved here, married here, lives and works here. Our son went to Saint Mary's University, met a girl with deep family roots here and was married here.

It is interesting to note that this meeting was not on the calendar yesterday morning, and we were advised that there was no meeting planned. More importantly we have since learned that the public consultation will not accommodate presentations from those deemed to be "non-residents". Like everything surrounding this proposal, there seems to be an air of secrecy and rushing in the hopes of pushing it through quickly. I hope I am wrong.

Having reviewed and listened to the letters, emails, articles, and voices of Nova Scotia businesses, residents and seasonal residents, and considering the multibillion dollar plan introduced in the Federal budget, you have an opportunity to take the high road, cancel this proposal, see how the Federal plan works, reach out for more input and ultimately develop a solution that can help solve the housing problem in a constructive and Pro-Canadian manner. There are clearly more effective and fairer options that could be considered if need be, with far fewer negative consequences.

We hope you take that opportunity and do what is right.

Respectfully,

Andy and Nora Gross

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