

[REDACTED]

From: John Hoyle [REDACTED]
Sent: April 13, 2022 5:12 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Fw: 2022 NS Property Tax Surcharge

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

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I am forwarding an email I sent on 10th April for your information and attention.

Kind regards

John Hoyle

From: John Hoyle
Sent: Sunday, April 10, 2022 11:02 AM
To: premier@novascotia.ca <premier@novascotia.ca>; FinanceMinister@novascotia.ca <FinanceMinister@novascotia.ca>; susancorkumgreekmla@gmail.com <susancorkumgreekmla@gmail.com>; patdunnmla@bellaliant.com <patdunnmla@bellaliant.com>; NSPropertyTax@novascotia.ca <NSPropertyTax@novascotia.ca>
Subject: 2022 NS Property Tax Surcharge
Dear Sirs/Madame

We are writing to urge you to reconsider your Government's recently announced plan to levy a property tax surcharge on non-resident homeowners.

We are residents of the United Kingdom who spend several months of every year in Nova Scotia. We have long standing links with friends in the Province. Whilst fully recognizing the urgent need that this tax seeks to address it is hard to see how this will achieve its stated policy objective of increasing housing supply. We share with you concerns about the affordability and availability of property for working people in the Province, something with which the UK is also struggling. However, the NS Department of Finance's own statistics show that non-resident home ownership is negligible in the primary population centres where housing supply is critically short, such as in the Halifax region. The planned tax will surely not materially increase housing availability in these densely populated areas for the simple reason that very few homes are owned by non-residents in these areas.

Our own property is located in a rural area near Lunenburg, an area that is heavily dependent upon spending and investment from tourism and seasonal non-residents. We would argue that by discouraging seasonal ownership by non-residents, the proposed tax will cause significant harm to the economic viability of these areas of the Province.

We have owned our property since 2004 and have spent several months every summer in Nova Scotia with our family until the pandemic prevented our travel from the UK. This property was designed by Nova Scotian architects, built by a Nova Scotian building company using resources and materials from local suppliers and is

maintained by local companies. We have furnished it over the years with furniture, art and crafts made by local people.

On an annual basis we transfer significant funds to our bank account in the Province and this has been used to pay our not insignificant property tax to the Municipal District of Lunenburg – a tax we fully accept and understand. Our money is also used to do business with boat brokers, chandlers and boat builders, local auto repair, restaurants, vineyards, shops and occasional trips to other parts of Nova Scotia. We have become involved with, and donated funds to, community organisations like the Lunenburg Yacht Club (where both our children learnt to sail), the Mahone Bay Islands Conservation Association (MICA), the Mahone Bay Settler Museum and many local cultural events. In each of the past 18 years we will have hosted on average 4 people from the UK and the USA who have been introduced to the beauty of Nova Scotia, travelled throughout the Province and spent money in the local economy; some have returned more than once but may not be likely to if we are no longer there.

If the proposed property tax is implemented as currently proposed, we would almost certainly be forced to sell our property and sever our long-standing ties with the Province – driven out by a level of punitive taxation that is unaffordable. We find this extraordinary and disappointing from a Province that holds a special place in our hearts and that we think of as our second home.

We urge you to reconsider this punitive property tax proposal.

Yours

John and Rosemary Hoyle