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Nova Scotia Minister of Finance - Allan MacMaster - FinanceMinister@novascotia.ca

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I am writing to add my voice to the discontent surrounding your governments recent budgetary tax grab for nonresident property owners. I wholeheartedly disagree with the newly proposed 2% non-resident provincial property tax. It will negatively impact rural Nova Scotia and is grossly unfair.

I am a property owner in rural Cumberland County, I have longstanding roots in the community, having been born in Amherst in 1965. Unfortunately, in my early 30's, my career and that of my husband, forced us to make the decision to move to Ontario. The economy of Nova Scotia did not support the needs of our careers at that time. Never has a year passed that I have not spent my vacation time in NS, we enjoyed it so much, we made the decision to purchase property and using local builders build a retirement property for our future. That future has unfortunately changed with the death of my husband in 2020, it has not, however, changed my desire to spend all the time available to me in Nova Scotia.

I am on the Board of Directors of a National charity, the Sandra Schmirler Foundation, upon my husbands passing my family was given the opportunity to make a sizable donation in any NICU in the country in my husband's memory. We choose the Cumberland County Regional Hospital.

A \$20000 grant was provided in July of 2021 to purchase a needed piece of life saving equipment for their Neo Natal Intensive Care Unit. Actions like these are not done by property speculators looking to make a buck, but by concerned members of our community who happen not to have the luxury of living in the home of their heart full time.

This is only a piece of my personal story; I'm sure others have also shared their stories with you.

The following are non-personal points I would like to address

- Implementing this new 2% provincial non-residential property/wealth tax will tarnish Nova Scotia's reputation as a fair place to live and do business.
- In Cumberland County, non-residents pay a disproportionate share of total municipal property taxes, yet most are seasonal residents only using their property for less than 15% in any given year.
- Non-residents are not a burden on the healthcare system in Nova Scotia. Their home province reimburses Nova Scotia for any health care services provided to a non-resident.
- There is no new service being offered to payers of this tax.
- Non-residents have no voting rights.
- The new non-resident property tax is unlikely to materially impact property prices and resale activity in urban centers like Halifax. Instead, the impact will be felt mainly in rural areas where most seasonal, non-resident owned properties are located. Supply of these properties will increase, and demand will decline together putting downward pressure on seasonal property prices. Also, new residential construction activity will likely slow in these areas. The economies of municipalities like Cumberland County, with its large number of New Brunswick seasonal property owners, could be particularly vulnerable. The wealth gap between Halifax (and surrounding area) and rural Nova Scotia will widen in the former's favour. This outcome does not appear to be in the broad public interest.

Regards,

Janet Murphy