

From: Ben Higham [REDACTED]
Sent: April 19, 2022 10:46 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Comment on Non Resident Tax

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Honourable Members of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments:

By way of introduction, my name is Benjamin Higham. I am a lawyer in the Province of Ontario. I own a home in Ontario and Nova Scotia. I purchased the home in Nova Scotia for my elderly parents to reside permanently as residents of Nova Scotia once they are granted Permanent Residency in Canada. I was approved as a sponsor and the residency application process is ongoing.

I will likely be caught by this tax, despite not being a speculator, and one who answered your government call to "Rediscover Nova Scotia."

We planned our family retirement down to the dollar.

I invested my life savings into Nova Scotia during the Covid pandemic.

- My home in Nova Scotia was recently purchased from Nova Scotia residents for about 300k.
- I have spent 250k on renovations with builders, building suppliers, various trades in Nova Scotia.
- Because of the logistical delay caused by the pandemic, the home renovations are not yet completed.
- Also because of the delay caused by the pandemic, my parent's permanent residency in Nova Scotia is delayed.

The Honourable Prime Minister has commented publicly that the government "has to do what it has to do" and "no one likes taxes." I suggest that governing requires more than passing the buck to those who: 1) are not responsible for the circumstances: 2) are providing considerable long and short-term financial benefit to local communities and the region as a whole.

This tax represents about 10% of my gross annual income - it is not de minimus. It will be harder for seniors on a fixed income to withstand. You know in your hearts that this is unjust.

In the very least, before such a drastic measure is taken, some thoughtful research should be conducted.

I suggest that this proposed tax will result in a short-term benefit that will have longstanding negative consequences:

- Increased health care costs for the Province (those who cannot pay the tax are more likely to change their residency to avoid the tax and likely will require more health care than those who can pay the tax);
- Lower land taxes for municipalities (every home will be worth less);
- Fewer dollars invested in the local and regional economy (less tax revenue as every dollar in gets passed between 10 people and taxed at each transaction);
- Lower home sale prices for retiring and relocating Nova Scotians

And all this with a negligible effect on the local housing stock.

Sincerely,
Ben Higham

Ben Higham

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