

To The Legislative Amendments Committee,

The purpose of this letter is to voice my strong opposition to the proposed Bill 149, specifically I would like to draw your attention to the damage this will cause to Nova Scotia's brand.

I am well placed to comment on the brand. I have been working with Canada's top branding companies for 30 years. I am part of a strong group of Canadians who make money outside Nova Scotia and invest it in Nova Scotia. This generates revenue for the province. We all understand Nova Scotia needs new revenue to pay for healthcare and housing. That is not in question. But when people like me gain maximum earning power outside the province and invest our surplus inside the province, we represent a net gain for the provincial revenues.

Bill 149 is seen as an ambush tax. It chases away investment and entrepreneurial brainpower.

Nova Scotia's strategy for recruiting and retaining talent has been a success. Nova Scotia's greatest asset is its people. Nova Scotians understand the province needs to attract and retain talent and I am living proof of how convincing Nova Scotians can be.

I have been coming to Nova Scotia since 1995 to visit my mother-in-law in Kingsburg. I have become immersed in my community. In 2009, a friend and neighbour in the home next door to her suggested she would need to leave the village to seek work. She offered us the opportunity to buy the house because she knew we would invest in the community and move permanently. For 13 years we have earned money outside the province and invested in the province so that we could launch a business in Nova Scotia. This new tax will triple our tax bill and threaten our business plan. It is upturning our lives. We have been recruiting others to join us and bring new ideas, investment, talent and energy to the Nova Scotian economy.

Upon graduating from high school, our son immediately moved to Nova Scotia to become a resident, attending university in Halifax and working summers in Lunenburg County in businesses created by out-of-province entrepreneurs who moved to Nova Scotia. The strategy for attracting talent, investment and ideas has taken a long time for Nova Scotia to realize. It is working. Why impose an ambush tax on the one strategic asset guaranteed to generate new revenues for the province?

I was born and raised in Thunder Bay where my father was an entrepreneur. I know how hard it is for a resource economy to build a brand able to attract new economy investment and talent. I have worked on some of Canada's most important branding initiatives. Please think carefully about your position on this tax. It will drive away investment and tarnish the unique brand Nova Scotians have worked so creatively to build.

Sincerely,

Deborah Prenger  
Kingsburg, NS