

October 24, 2023

Office of the Legislative Counsel  
CIBC Building, Suite 802  
1809 Barrington Street  
PO Box 1116  
Halifax, NS B3J 2X1

Re: Support for Bill 340

A new Service Exchange Agreement Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been a long-standing priority of the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) and the Town of Berwick. I was fortunate to sit on the Service Exchange Review and Municipal Government Act Review (SERMGAR) advisory committee, which had a large mandate and number of topics to consider. The advice and recommendations we were able to provide should be considered a success, and a step in the right direction.

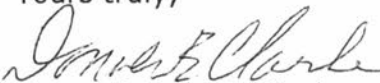
The MOU will address areas of mutual interest between the province and municipalities. The Municipal Fiscal Capacity Grant formula has been modernized to recognize the changes in municipal services since the last MOU. The cessation of municipal contributions to housing net operating losses and corrections reduces the financial stress on municipalities who have higher populations of vulnerable people.

Roads have been another long-standing priority of NSFM, particularly the inequity of funding, which for Towns with municipality-owned trunks and routes, is considerable. Part A recognizes this inequity, the drastically deteriorating infrastructure and the radically rising costs associated with roads and provides municipalities with much needed funding that was previously not available.

The new infrastructure funding will make it possible for smaller municipalities to secure their share of funding to address other critical infrastructure, such as storm and sanitary systems.

On behalf of the Town of Berwick, I implore you to support the proposed law amendments in Bill 340, and we hope to see progress continue with work on the topics identified in Schedule A.

Yours truly,

  
Mayor Donald E. Clarke