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**From:** Heather Mac Pherson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** March 4, 2024 7:35 AM  
**To:** Office of the Legislative Counsel  
**Subject:** Revised: Law Amendment Committee Re: Consolidation of Antigonish

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Dear Committee Members,

I am unable to attend in person, but I wanted to speak about the people of Antigonish being excluded from voting. The Consolidation issue wasn't brought up during Municipal elections, but it was done secretly during a global pandemic. Many people, including me, only heard about it from a Facebook group, and by that time it sounded like a done deal! The people of Antigonish Town and County wanted a plebiscite on the issue, but NINE people took away our democratic right to vote...TWICE!

I know how important cooperation is in a community, since my great uncle, Dr. Hugh MacPherson, and two double cousins, on my mom's side, were Dr. Moses Coady and Fr. Jimmy Tompkins, of the Antigonish Movement. However by forcing the Town and County to Consolidate, I am afraid this forced Amalgamation will backfire and divide the Town and County, even further. People want to have "a say" in how their lives are to be governed, otherwise we no longer live in a democracy.

My dad was a WWII Infantry soldier (8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade/ Queen's Own Rifles (1943-1945), who continued to serve with the North Novas for clean up, then transitioned to the Air Force, where he got an honorable discharge in 1954, for mental wounds. After the war, dad took over the ancestral farm, in Upper South River, Antigonish Co., that has been in our family since 1802. My mother was an elementary school teacher, and volunteered in both the Town and County of Antigonish...as did I, so working with town residents isn't an issue. My MacPherson ancestors came from Scotland in 1802, and settled in Antigonish Co., while my Coady ancestors came from Ireland, in 1830, and settled in Margaree Forks, to escape persecution and starvation. The importance of being able to vote for one's future pathway and good of our community, was instilled on me, and my brother, at a young age. Canada was, (and hopefully still is) the land of the free; and, that freedom came with a price, paid for, by the deaths of so many young soldiers. Growing up, we heard how the Antigonish Movement instilled in people the dream to be "Masters of their own destiny", but you cannot force people to comply, by taking away our right to vote.

Amalgamation or Annexation came up over 20 years ago, and people were allowed to vote then, and the issue was quashed: "The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board has rejected a proposal for the two municipalities to become one, saying there's not enough public support for a merger. In fact, the board said in a decision released Monday that an amalgamation process could lead to more fighting" CBC October 30, 2006).

Nine people took away our right to vote, for our future and that of future generations. More than nine people built this town and county and more than nine people pay taxes. Please, allow the people of Antigonish Town and County to be Masters of Their OWN Destiny...LET US VOTE!

Thank You,

Heather MacPherson  
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