

**From:** Megan Crowley  
**Sent:** March 15, 2025 3:20 PM  
**To:** Office of the Legislative Counsel  
**Subject:** Written Submissions to the Public Bills committee- bills 1, 6, 11, 12, 24  
**Attachments:** Written Submissions to the Public Bills committee\_Crowley.pdf

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### **Written Submissions to the Public Bills committee**

Nova Scotians ask you to rescind (or vote no) to Bills 1, 6, 11, 12 and 24. These bills represent vast government overreach and working to dismantle democracy in Nova Scotia.

I do not support Bill 1 and reducing transparency by allowing freedom of information requests to be denied, dismantling communications NS, limiting debate in the legislature, and granting authority for non-unionized government workers to be fired without cause. N.S. information commissioner Tricia Ralph states that "the legislation [in bill 1] could diminish government accountability" and "is calling on the governing party to withdraw legislation that she says weakens the public's right to access government records and documents." (from CBC). This is a significant withdrawal of transparency and accountability and should not go through.

I do not support lifting bans and community consent on uranium mining and fracking in Bill 6. Removing requirements for community consent for fracking is alarming and an irresponsible way to proceed with something that can cause so much harm. Nova Scotia has the densest rural population in Canada. Over 40,000 families and houses depend on well water for drinking. In Saskatchewan, uranium mines are 600 km away from communities and towns. Before you vote on this, I would ask if you are comfortable having a uranium mine or fracking site close to your house and your family? I implore you to vote no to Bill 6. Tim Houston is greenwashing Nova Scotians about the ability to safely mine and frack, and the science backs up the dangers. Studies have found that fracking and uranium mining are linked with contaminated water, lung cancer, respiratory diseases, congenital birth defects, childhood asthma & leukemia, cardiovascular and respiratory disease, higher overall mortality rates and reduced life expectancy. This is completely against the health care platform that the Conservatives ran on and will cost more in health care dollars in the long run. The rights and voices of KMK and the Assembly of NS Mi'kmaq Chiefs need to be heard and consulted on well before any legislative changes are made.

Uranium mining also adds in health risks from radioactive dust and potential water contamination. It is also fiscally irresponsible as the mining and milling waste are a perpetual health hazard (far more toxic than uranium) that will need to be monitored and managed at the public expense for thousands of years with significant and severe water contamination risks.

Jobs that benefit our province and its people are one that are forward looking and green. Climate change has been listed as the greatest global health threat of the 21st century and the forest fires, floods, and storms we have seen in the last decade make it clear we should not be promoting fracking and uranium mining. Retired geologist Dr. Elisabeth Kusters wrote in the Halifax Examiner "Does Nova Scotia have a large uranium reserve? We don't really know, because Nova Scotia has had a ban on uranium exploration for decades. But we do know that our reserve is completely insignificant compared to that of Saskatchewan...Nova Scotia uranium is not now and never will be economic on any scale whatsoever and that's leaving out whether it's desirable to produce uranium or not."

Retired University professor, Gillian Thomas, in another Halifax Examiner article, "painstakingly debunks all the claims about the benefits of uranium mining that MANS touts in its report, one by one. Among other things, she noted:

- Uranium is not universally agreed to be a “critical mineral,” essential for the transition to a clean energy. It is not designated as a critical mineral in Nova Scotia, nor is it in the UK and France, although both depend heavily on nuclear power.
- MANS relies almost entirely on the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission to argue that uranium mining is “safe” for both humans and the environment, although the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, officially the regulator, has been shown to have an “institutional bias” in favour of the nuclear industry, something the Canadian Environmental Law Association has frequently condemned.
- MANS ignores numerous peer-reviewed studies showing clear health and environmental risks of uranium mining and contamination, including the 2011 book, ‘Uranium Mining in Virginia: Scientific, Technical, Environmental, Human Health and Safety, and Regulatory Aspects of Uranium Mining and Processing in Virginia.’”

Another point raised was If uranium mining is only allowed in arid states in the USA [due to safety concerns and Virginia has had a supreme court upheld ban due to its high rainfall and intense storms], why would Nova Scotia be suitable when it has a higher precipitation rate than Virginia (and much higher than Saskatchewan) and a history of intense storms that are only going to increase in intensity and frequency with climate change?

It does not make sense financially, environmentally or socially to lift these bans. Nova Scotians do not want you to lift these bans. This is backed up by Dr. Steven Emerman, who is a mining expert and also a retired university professor and geophysicist who is world renown. “Emerman told the Halifax Examiner that the ban on uranium mining in Nova Scotia should stay in place, and that among many other things, the high precipitation in the province alone should preclude safe uranium exploration or mining.”

I also oppose the ability to override the authority of municipal governments to make decisions about transportation (bill 24) and having government overreach in academic settings that influence research and education (bill 12). Universities need academic independence for excellence and impartiality. It is not okay to control and force change on institutions or government bodies that do not agree with you. This is not democratic.

I also disagree with changes in Bill 11 that allow health providers to charge more to private insurance than MSI pay limits. This is a playbook from Doug Ford. I am worried that instead of strengthening public health care, Tim Houston is working to divert public funds to for-profits private companies. This breaks the system by underfunding it and forces people to seek private care when they don't have any other options and pushes Tim Houston's privatization of health services agenda. Provinces that outsource care have longer wait times, and higher costs. Please direct public money into the public health system.

Tim Houston's conservative government may have a super-majority, but this is not because the majority of the people of Nova Scotia are behind him. Tim Houston broke his own law to call an early election in a mail strike and when the political climate was advantageous. It is the MLAs job to vote in the best interest of the people of Nova Scotia, not special-interest industry associations that have a poor track record in Nova Scotia, or for bills that overstep authority. These changes were not included in the platform of the Conservatives and significant changes should not be passed quickly through an omnibus bill and without listening to the concerns across party lines from Nova Scotians throughout this province.

Sincerely,

Megan Crowley



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**From:** Chantal Gagnon [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** March 14, 2025 7:27 PM  
**To:** Office of the Legislative Counsel  
**Subject:** Monday March 17th, Public Bills Committee - Written Submission Bill 12  
**Attachments:** PublicBillsCommitteeMarch172025Bill12.pdf

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Dear Public Bills Committee,

Please find attached in PDF format my written submission regarding Bill 12 - An Act Respecting Advanced Education and Research.

Regards  
Chantal Gagnon  
Greenwood, NS  
BOP 1N0

### **Written Submissions to the Public Bills committee**

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Sincerely,

Megan Crowley

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Spencer Morgan [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** March 17, 2025 3:24 AM  
**To:** Office of the Legislative Counsel  
**Subject:** NS Public Bills Committee - 17 Mar 2025 - comment on proposed changes

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Hello Public Bills Committee,

I am writing out of concern for the many "overreach" measures the Tim Houston government is proposing all at once, without public consultation, legislative debate or any mention in their recent election platform.

The PC election campaign did not mention, and therefore no one voted for:

- Repealing fracking & uranium bans,
- 25% MLA pay raise,
- making auditor general reports private,
- intimidation of the auditor general,
- firing non-union employees without cause,
- abolish hospital ER closure report and doctors wait list dashboard,
- abolish Communication Dept.,
- restrict freedom of the press,
- limit opposition party question period,
- remove public participation and the power to amend laws from the Law Amendments Committee,
- abolish municipal consultation on transportation,
- take control of university boards and funding,
- while ignoring affordability, housing, climate change, Chignecto Isthmus, etc.

The Premiere's plans are government overreach, too much, too fast, too sloppy (throw-everything-to-see-what-sticks), and veer too far into anti-democratic areas.

Most of these changes, if not outright undemocratic, could certainly be used that way and weakens our system of government at a time when our democracy should be strengthened. We shouldn't respond to Trump's chaos with even more chaos.

Premiere Houston speaks of "resounding mandates" and hearing the people "loud and clear," while calling those who oppose his omnibus bulldozer legislation "special interest groups" and "paid protesters." I assure you, I am on no one's protest payroll, belong to no activist groups, and am speaking on my own behalf as a registered voter and concerned citizen.

I would like to remind the current government that they campaigned mainly on fixing health care and removing Halifax bridge tolls, and were elected by just 24% of eligible voters and 52% of the popular vote, hardly a "resounding mandate." It is far more likely that heavy industry and foreign lobbyists are the "special interests."

Knowing Tim Houston's personal eagerness to support Everwind's green hydrogen subsidy grab, I can only assume that the taxpayers will be subsidizing these new industries as well, then paying for the cleanup after the subsidies dry up and those enriched declare bankruptcy and leave, as seems to be the pattern.


Many years ago, the PC party self-described as socially responsible, fiscally conservative government for the people. What happened?

I'm asking you to have the "mature discussion" that Houston is promising, otherwise it just feels like backroom sellouts and bulldozer legislation.

Thank you very much for your understanding and representation.

Best regards,

Spencer Morgan

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**From:** NSHC Nova Scotia Health Coalition <coordinator@nshealthcoalition.ca>  
**Sent:** March 14, 2025 2:30 PM  
**To:** Office of the Legislative Counsel  
**Subject:** Submission to Public Bill Committee  
**Attachments:** Bill 11 Submission (1).pdf

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Good Afternoon,

Please see the attached submission for the Public Bill Committee regarding Bill 11 the Administrative Efficiency and Accountability in Healthcare Act.

Respectfully Submitted on behalf of the Nova Scotia Health Coalition



Mar 17, 2025



Submission to the Nova Scotia Public Bills  
Committee

Bill 11: "The Administrative Efficiency and  
Accountability in Healthcare Act"

**The Nova Scotia Health Coalition is deeply concerned about Bill 11.**

The title of the bill sounds innocent and relevant, "The Administrative Efficiency and Accountability in Healthcare Act"

However, this bill **threatens our public healthcare system** and the workers who keep it running.

After reading this bill carefully, we see it as a hazardous step toward greater privatization of our healthcare in Nova Scotia and if we continue on this path we will have an American-style healthcare system, one that leaves many people behind.

**The deeply concerning sections of Bill 11 are Sections 4 and 5.** These Health Services and Insurance Act changes would allow the Minister of Health to instruct doctors and other healthcare providers to bill private insurance companies instead of our public Medicare system. **Section 4** adds a directive allowing healthcare providers to charge "a private or public insurance plan other than the MSI. Plan." This means the services our public system should cover could be shifted to private insurance companies.

What's even more disconcerting, **Section 5** will allow providers to charge these private insurers more than our public system would pay. This strongly promoting private care, where the most money can be made. These changes mirror what happens in the United States, where private insurance companies pay hospitals more than Medicare, some estimate as much as 254% more for the same services. This massive difference in payment rates is one of the main reasons American healthcare costs twice as much per person as our Canadian healthcare without better results.

**Creating a Two-Tier System Where Money Matters More Than Need:**

By allowing higher payments to private insurance, Bill 11 creates a system where Nova Scotians with private insurance will likely get better and faster care than those who rely on our public system. This goes against the basic Canadian principle that healthcare should be based on need, not on ability to pay. This kind of system has created serious problems in the United States. Again it's estimated that about 15% of Americans have no health insurance, and many others face huge bills even with insurance.

**Is this really what we want for Nova Scotia?** When doctors can make more money treating patients with private insurance, they naturally spend more time doing that. This creates a system of what is called a "dual practice" where healthcare providers split their time between public and private care, with private patients getting more attention because they bring in more money. We've seen this happen in other places that have tried this approach. Wait times for public patients get longer, while those with private insurance jump to the front of the line. This isn't fair, and it isn't the way for our prided Canadian Health Care system.

**Draining Resources from Our Public System:** Bill 11 will create further negative outcomes to our current healthcare staffing crisis. Private clinics do not recruit new doctors and nurses, they take them from our public system. As many health care unions and health Care groups in our province and the Country have pointed out, staff working in private clinics don't come out of nowhere. They're leaving the public system to go private, making the staffing crisis in Nova Scotia much worse. Private healthcare providers typically pay higher salaries, creating an exodus of workers from our public system. Plainly, healthcare unions have been sounding the alarm bells on this for a long time. This leaves our public health care system short-staffed with workers struggling to provide care for those who need it. Privatization of health services often means that private facilities often only receive the least complex cases, leaving the public

system staff to struggle to support Nova Scotians with far more complex health issues. This means the public system becomes responsible for the most challenging and resource-intensive cases but with fewer resources and staff to address them.

**Higher Costs for All Nova Scotians:** we know what has happened in the United States and elsewhere that have moved toward private healthcare, we know that costs go up for everyone. This means that allowing a two-tier payment system doesn't just create parallel tracks; it drives up costs throughout the entire system.

**The Path Toward American-Style Healthcare:** Bill 11 represents a downward spiral toward greater privatization in Nova Scotia, **and six of our ten provinces have banned private insurance for publicly insured services to prevent queue jumping and preserve fairness.** Bill 11 moves in the opposite direction.

This bill does not introduce more choice, it only shows privatization tends to expand once it begins and it's well underway in our province and is expanding with recent announcements of greater privatization. Bill 11 would push us further toward the American model, which has proven to be the most expensive and least equitable healthcare system in the developed world.

**What This Will Mean for Nova Scotians:** If Bill 11 passes, here's what Nova Scotians can expect:

- A healthcare system where your care depends on whether you have good private insurance, not on your medical needs.
- Wait times in public facilities are longer as resources and staff are drawn to the private system, where they can make more money.
- Higher costs for everyone as private insurance premiums go up to cover the higher fees allowed under section.
- More difficulty recruiting and retaining healthcare workers in the public system, making current shortages even worse.
- A gradual shift toward an American-style system where healthcare is treated as a market commodity rather than a right.

**We call on this committee to:**

- **Remove sections 4 and 5 of Bill 11 altogether.** These sections open the door to American-style privatization and have no place in legislation protecting public healthcare.
- Keep the Emergency Department Accountability Act in place to ensure transparency about how our emergency departments function.
- Add clear language to protect healthcare workers from any negative impacts of administrative changes, including guarantees of continued collective bargaining rights.
- Consult meaningfully with healthcare unions before significantly changing how healthcare is delivered in our province.
- Focus on real solutions to healthcare challenges: better working conditions, appropriate staffing levels, and proper funding for public healthcare.

The citizens of Nova Scotia are watching closely. Bill 11 is not just about administrative changes, it's about the future of our healthcare system and whether we want to preserve the Canadian model or move toward an American one.

Allowing providers to bill private insurers at higher rates than MSI creates financial incentives that drain resources from the public system, create unfair access to care, and lead to a gradual but persistent privatization of healthcare in our province. This is not the way forward for Nova Scotia.

Our members work daily to care for Nova Scotians. They deserve better than legislation that undermines their work and threatens our public healthcare system, a system where you get care no matter the size of your bank account. We urge you to reject the privatization agenda hidden in Bill 11. Rather let's work together to strengthen our public healthcare system for everyone in Nova Scotia.

Respectfully Submitted by

Jennifer Benoit

Provincial Coordinator

Nova Scotia Health Coalition.

**From:** Joan Wark <joan@nslabour.ca>  
**Sent:** March 14, 2025 11:37 AM  
**To:** Office of the Legislative Counsel  
**Subject:** Submission from the NS Federation of Labour on Bill 11

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## Submission to the Nova Scotia Public Bills Committee on Bill 11: The Administrative Efficiency and Accountability in Healthcare Act

Submission from the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, which represents over 70,000 workers across our province.

With much respect, this bill may sound innocent with its titles about "efficiency" and "accountability," but make no mistake: It threatens our public healthcare system and the workers who keep it running. A close look at the bill reveals that it is a dangerous step toward greater privatization of healthcare in Nova Scotia. It will continue on the path toward an American-style healthcare system, one that leaves many people behind.

Sections 4 and 5 we see as the most troubling. These Health Services and Insurance Act changes would let the Minister of Health tell doctors and other healthcare providers to bill private insurance companies instead of our public Medicare system. The bill adds a new rule allowing healthcare providers to charge a private or public insurance plan other than the MSI Plan. This means that the services our public system should cover could be shifted to private insurance companies. Even worse, it will allow health care providers to charge private insurers more than our public system would pay. This creates a strong push toward private care, where the most money can be made. These changes mirror what happens in the United States, where private insurance companies pay hospitals more than Medicare.

This is one of the main reasons American healthcare costs twice as much per person as our Canadian healthcare, and we know the American system does not provide better results.

By allowing higher payments to private insurance, Bill 11 creates a system where Nova Scotians with private insurance will likely get better and faster care than those who rely on our public system. This goes against our basic Canadian principle that healthcare should be based on need, not on the ability to pay. This kind of system has created serious problems in the United States, where many citizens simply do not have health insurance, and many American citizens face huge bills even with insurance.

**Is this really what we want for Nova Scotia?**

When doctors can make more money treating patients with private insurance, they naturally spend more time doing that. This creates a "dual practice" system where healthcare providers split their time between public and private care, with private patients getting more attention because they bring in more money. We've seen this happen in other places that have tried this approach. Wait times for public patients get longer, while those with private insurance jump to the front of the line. This isn't fair, and it isn't the way for our prided Canadian Health Care system.

**Draining Resources from Our Public System:** Bill 11 will worsen our healthcare staffing crisis. Private clinics don't create positions for new doctors and nurses; they take them from our public system. As many healthcare unions and healthcare groups in our province and Country have pointed out, staff working in private clinics don't appear out of nowhere. They're leaving the public system to go the private providers, making the staffing crisis in Nova Scotia much worse. Private healthcare providers typically pay higher salaries, creating an exodus of workers from our public system. Many healthcare unions have been sounding alarm bells about this for a long time. This leaves our public health care system short-staffed, with workers struggling to care for those who need it. Privatization of health services often means that private facilities only receive the least complex cases, leaving the public system staff to struggle to support Nova Scotians with far more complicated health issues. This means the public system becomes responsible for the most challenging and resource-intensive cases but with fewer resources and staff to address them.

**Higher Costs for All Nova Scotians:** Looking at what's happened in the United States and elsewhere that have moved toward private healthcare, we know that costs go up for everyone. This means that allowing a two-tier payment system doesn't just create parallel tracks; it drives up costs throughout the system.

**The Path Toward American-Style Healthcare:** Bill 11 represents a slippery slope toward greater privatization in Nova Scotia. Six of our ten provinces have banned private insurance for publicly insured services to prevent queue jumping and preserve fairness. Bill 11 moves in the opposite direction.

Some might say this Bill introduces more choice, but experience shows privatization tends to expand once it begins. It's well underway in our province and is increasing with recent announcements of greater privatization. Bill 11 would push us further toward the American model, which has proven to be the most expensive and least equitable healthcare system in the developed world.

**What This Means for Nova Scotians:** If Bill 11 passes, here's what Nova Scotians can expect:

- A healthcare system where your care depends on whether you have good private insurance, not on your medical needs.
- Wait times in public facilities get longer as resources and staff are drawn to the private system.
- Higher costs as private insurance premiums go up to cover the higher fees allowed by the bill.
- Greater difficulty attracting and keeping healthcare workers in the public system, making current shortages even worse.
- A gradual shift toward an American-style system where healthcare is treated as a market commodity rather than a right.

**We call on this committee to:**

- Remove sections 4 and 5 of Bill 11 altogether. These sections open the door to American-style privatization and have no place in legislation protecting public healthcare.

- Keep the Emergency Department Accountability Act in place to ensure transparency about how our emergency departments function.
- Add clear language to protect healthcare workers from any negative impacts of administrative changes, including guarantees of continued collective bargaining rights.
- Consult meaningfully with healthcare unions before significantly changing how healthcare is delivered in our province.
- Focus on real solutions to healthcare challenges: better working conditions, appropriate staffing levels, and proper funding for public healthcare.

Bill 11 is not just about administrative changes; it's about the future of our healthcare system and whether we want to preserve the public model or move toward an American one. Allowing providers to bill private insurers at higher rates than MSI creates financial incentives that drain resources from the public system, create unfair access to care, and lead to a gradual but persistent privatization of healthcare in our province. This is not the way forward for Nova Scotia.

Our members work daily to care for Nova Scotians. They deserve better than legislation that undermines their work and threatens our public healthcare system, a system where you get care no matter the size of your bank account. We urge you to reject the privatization agenda hidden in Bill 11. Instead, let's work together to strengthen our public healthcare system for everyone in Nova Scotia.

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** March 16, 2025 6:01 PM  
**To:** Office of the Legislative Counsel  
**Cc:** Claudia Chender; 'Danielle Barkhouse'  
**Subject:** submission by Lisa Wolfe to the Public Bills Committee  
**Attachments:** Submission to the Public Bills Committee March 17 2025 by Lisa Wolfe.docx

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Submission to the **Public Bills Committee** March 17, 2025

By Lisa Wolfe, [REDACTED]

Citizen of a Democratic Society living in the Province of Nova Scotia, Country of CANADA

**Cc:** *Nova Scotia NDP Leader Claudia Chender, Leader of the Official Opposition; Danielle Barkhouse, MLA  
Chester St. Margarets*

On Monday, March 17, 2025 your Committee is tasked with hearing from the citizens of Nova Scotia regarding Bills 1, 6, 11, 12, 21, 36 and 68. You were once the "Law Amendments Committee". Now, as the "Public Bills Committee" you no longer have the ability to propose amendments to these Bills based on the feedback and suggestions presented to you (Resolution 5). The Public can state their opinions, but you have no power to act. This is not democracy.

All of the above Bills are being introduced without meaningful public consultation which is the basis for our democracy. Each Bill covers a range of amendments that reduce transparency, dissolve government departments, repeal and revoke moratoriums, bans and Acts, and grant unprecedented autocratic powers to our government.

This is government overreach at its worst. This government is tabling a barrage of Bills in which it hides substantial authoritarian power grabs amidst supposedly legitimate policy changes. We need a transparent government that does not try and blindside its constituency by burying its real agenda in bureaucratic government-speak.

I am ashamed of our Provincial Government and especially our Premier for even attempting to propose these Bills in such an undemocratic way. In no way were these sweeping changes a part of the Conservative Government's election platform. This is not the Premier's mandate. This is a particularly despicable move on the part of the government, given the power grab south of our border. It is taking advantage of the distractions and uncertainty of our future as Nova Scotians and Canadians to push through these Bills into Law. We, as Nova Scotians, should not have to enter into a fight against an authoritarian government in our home Province. Canada is a democracy. Nova Scotia is part of Canada. What is happening here is undemocratic and does a disservice to us, your constituents.

I ask that you make recommendation to our Government to take these Bills off the table and re-submit them to the citizens of Nova Scotia in a democratic manner.



These are the changes being proposed without meaningful public consultation which will grant overreaching powers to the government and reduce transparency and accountability (Bills 21 and 68 are particularly overwhelming and totally lacking in transparency):

Bill 1:

- Grants authority to fire non-unionized civil servants without cause
- Will reduce transparency by enabling the government to reject freedom of information requests deemed "frivolous or vexatious"
- Will dissolve Communications Nova Scotia
- Will repeal fixed election dates
- **Important to note that this Bill also would have given the government the authority to fire the Auditor General without cause and keep the Auditor General's reports secret (The Premier promised to change this, but it is not as yet out of the Bill)**

Bill 6:

- Will revoke the moratorium on fracking
- Will revoke the ban on uranium exploration

Bill 11:

- Amends the Health Services and Insurance Act
- Amends the Human Organ and Tissue Donation Act
- Repeals the Emergency Department Accountability Act

Bill 12:

- Gives the Provincial government more control over universities, colleges and research

Bill 21:

- Abolishes the Family Court Act
- Amends Oil and Gas Operations Act
- Amends Adult Capacity and Decision Making Act
- Amends Powers of Attorney Act
- Amends Provincial Court Act

Bill 36:

- Makes amendments to remove interprovincial trade barriers

Bill 68:

- Introduces Entertainment and Classification Act
- Makes changes to:
  - Beneficiaries Designation
  - Income Tax Act
  - Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission
  - Halifax Municipality Charter
  - Financial Act
  - International Recovery of Child Support and Family Maintenance
  - Non-residence Deed Transfer Tax Act
  - Public Service Superannuation Act
  - Provides for the exclusion of Temporary Wage Subsidy retroactive to March 25, 2020

It is a disgrace for the citizens of Nova Scotia to be given this agenda at any time but especially in the current atmosphere of global instability. Do your jobs as representatives of Nova Scotians and conduct yourselves in a

manner conducive to a democratic government. Reprimand our government and make sure these Bills go out to meaningful public consultation before they are passed into Law. To do anything less is unconscionable.

Submitted by

Lisa Wolfe

[REDACTED]

Submission to the **Public Bills Committee** March 17, 2025

By Lisa Wolfe, [REDACTED]

Citizen of a Democratic Society living in the Province of Nova Scotia, Country of CANADA

Cc: *Nova Scotia NDP Leader Claudia Chender, Leader of the Official Opposition; Danielle Barkhouse, MLA Chester St. Margarets*

On Monday, March 17, 2025 your Committee is tasked with hearing from the citizens of Nova Scotia regarding Bills 1, 6, 11, 12, 21, 36 and 68. You were once the "Law Amendments Committee". Now, as the "Public Bills Committee" you no longer have the ability to propose amendments to these Bills based on the feedback and suggestions presented to you (Resolution 5). The Public can state their opinions, but you have no power to act. This is not democracy.

All of the above Bills are being introduced without meaningful public consultation which is the basis for our democracy. Each Bill covers a range of amendments that reduce transparency, dissolve government departments, repeal and revoke moratoriums, bans and Acts, and grant unprecedented autocratic powers to our government.

This is government overreach at its worst. This government is tabling a barrage of Bills in which it hides substantial authoritarian power grabs amidst supposedly legitimate policy changes. We need a transparent government that does not try and blindside its constituency by burying its real agenda in bureaucratic government-speak.

I am ashamed of our Provincial Government and especially our Premier for even attempting to propose these Bills in such an undemocratic way. In no way were these sweeping changes a part of the Conservative Government's election platform. This is not the Premier's mandate. This is a particularly despicable move on the part of the government, given the power grab south of our border. It is taking advantage of the distractions and uncertainty of our future as Nova Scotians and Canadians to push through these Bills into Law. We, as Nova Scotians, should not have to enter into a fight against an authoritarian government in our home Province. Canada is a democracy. Nova Scotia is part of Canada. What is happening here is undemocratic and does a disservice to us, your constituents.

I ask that you make recommendation to our Government to take these Bills off the table and re-submit them to the citizens of Nova Scotia in a democratic manner.

These are the changes being proposed without meaningful public consultation which will grant overreaching powers to the government and reduce transparency and accountability (Bills 21 and 68 are particularly overwhelming and totally lacking in transparency):

**Bill 1:**

- Grants authority to fire non-unionized civil servants without cause
- Will reduce transparency by enabling the government to reject freedom of information requests deemed "frivolous or vexatious"
- Will dissolve Communications Nova Scotia
- Will repeal fixed election dates
- **Important to note that this Bill also would have given the government the authority to fire the Auditor General without cause and keep the Auditor General's reports secret (The Premier promised to change this, but it is not as yet out of the Bill)**

**Bill 6:**

- Will revoke the moratorium on fracking
- Will revoke the ban on uranium exploration

**Bill 11:**

- Amends the Health Services and Insurance Act
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