



Nova Scotia League for Equal Opportunities

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Presentation (NSLEO) to the Standing Committee on Community Services May 7th, 2013

For over thirty-two years, the Nova Scotia League for Equal Opportunities (NSLEO) has worked diligently to ensure that Nova Scotia is a province in which people with disabilities can live, learn, and work with dignity in their home and communities. Collaborating closely with our community and provincial partners, we have supported and advanced our mission to identify and articulate the issues that impact people's daily lives and to formulate and propose workable solutions.

With over 20 percent of Nova Scotians identifying as having a disability, (HANDOUT #1.) we are committed to making disability issues a central consideration in all government and community initiatives.

People with disabilities in all regions of our province continue to experience daily exclusion in all areas of their lives. They are too often unable to enjoy a sense of community because they cannot find

- affordable & accessible housing,
- technical aids (wheelchairs & tech support for the blind to only name two),
- affordable and accessible transportation,
- adequate home care support that is accessible enough to meet their living needs.

People with disabilities all too often live in poverty because they cannot access the support they need to obtain and maintain meaningful employment. Persons with disabilities are 50% more likely to live in poverty.

Strong and inclusive communities require a robust network of community supports for all their residents including supports needed to accommodate and level the playing fields for those residents with disabilities.

I think it is important to recognize the assistance from governments to be sure but also it is important that we all recognize the amount of self-help provided by our disability organizations themselves, such as NSLEO, Nova Scotia Independent Living Centre, Society of Deaf & Hard of Hearing Nova Scotians, etc. and that, with government and self help in partnership, the disability community in Nova Scotia has seen steady improvement over the past decade.

However, the future ability for many disability organizations in NS has been negatively impacted by recent Federal cuts to community-based programs and services for people with disabilities. For years Service Canada has been a major contributor of core funding that allowed organizations such as ours to pursue such initiatives on behalf of the disability community. But beginning this year, they

are cutting that support over the next 2 years by 1/3 each year down to zero next year's fiscal year 2014-2015..

Understandably, that is requiring us to adjust by changing our operations.

So to the questions I came here to answer:

- **What is the Nova Scotia League for Equal Opportunities (NSLEO) all about?**
- **What does the League do?**

Please refer to HANDOUT #2 which is a copy of our most recent Canada Revenue Agency T-3010 Charities Report summary.

I've heard some folks refer to us at (NSLEO) as "an advocacy organization" and others call us a "consumer organization". Personally, I don't think either of those descriptions fit or are a good description of what we do. In my opinion, the best term to describe us is catalyst. Think of the old grade school science experiment where you poured oil on water. The oil floated on top and they didn't mix until you added a little dish cleaning detergent as a catalyst.

That is what (NSLEO) is. We're a catalyst. (NSLEO) is a very small but provincial organization which this year has reduced its staff to one and we've closed our physical office. We have a very small budget. We thus cannot do the heavy lifting that our problems call for. So our successes (and we have had many of them), come from initiatives that act like catalysts to help overcome the barriers to inclusion in our society.

We do appreciate the \$35,100.00 annual investment community services continue to give us over the last 20 years or so. Our most recent T-3010 Charities Report summarizes basic financial and other information about the League (NSLEO) including ten (10) activities in which we were involved last year:

- #1.** Under contract with the Province, we manage the Provincial Access Awareness program (PAANS) which included raising funds for scholarships for students with disabilities across the province, approx \$22,500.00 . The Disabled Persons commission in 2005, asked us to take this over and we are glad to have created great disability organization and corporate partnerships.
- #2.** The League (NSLEO) accepted an invitation to sit as a member of and to bring a "disability voice" to a working committee tasked with developing a Poverty Reduction Strategy for Nova Scotia, in 2009. One of our member travelled for 6 months every 2 weeks in order to make sure disability issues were addressed for all disability types and we included their voice when we could. We were honoured to be picked by the government of the day for that input. .
- #3.** Wheelchairs for children & adults - for 20 years has been one of (NSLEO) priority and we were glad in 2003 when the government of the day invested \$1 million dollars for us to sit at the table with Easter Seals NS who overseas the program. We are very pleased now that, in the most recent provincial budget, an additional almost \$400,000.00 was added to the program for seniors over 65. That addition will help seniors live at home.
- #4.** Disability information sharing sessions - the League (NSLEO) members and Nova Scotia affiliates come together via conference calls and a couple of times annually to share information regarding issues facing individuals with cross-disabilities. We also invite various community partners

and other organizations to share information regarding issues facing individuals with cross-disabilities. The goal of this is to identify the issues and formulate ways members and partners can work together/collaborate to address the barriers to inclusion within our communities. These sessions also provide an opportunity to educate our members and the general public on a variety of issues, policies and programs focused on disabilities, to compare notes and share information from across Nova Scotia

#5. Community based Transportation (Please refer to HANDOUT #3)

It was in 1981 that our local Halifax affiliate that advocated for what is now known as HRH Access-A-Bus.

Then in 1996, two of our affiliates lead by example and started what is now known as community based transportation -formerly known as Dial-a-Ride. In 1999 the government started pilots in Yarmouth and Bridgetown and in 2001 started CTAP community transportation assistance program which has grown to 14 systems covering 76% of Rural NS and in 2011 logged over 1.4 million kms .

- Grew \$520,000 of Provincial investment in grants through partnerships with municipalities, local businesses, health care groups, fund raising and fares, to \$2.3 million dollars

6. Public and member disability education and awareness NSLEO

provides a telephone call-in disability information & referral service to community, government leaders and to the general public as do our provincial affiliates in Nova Scotia. We also last month hosted a well attended public disability forum to which members of and those serving the disability community could bring forward disability issues and concerns relative to rural areas in our province.

#7. The provincial disability strategy -Since 2008, NSLEO has been committed to advancing the development of a Nova Scotia Disability Strategy. The initiative began with this Community Services Standing Committee when then Chair, MLA Marilyn Moore suggested that the disability groups should try to get together and speak to government with "one voice". NSLEO called a meeting of the various groups to organize her suggestion. As a result, currently, a group of about 20 disability organizations have formed a Partnership and are working together to develop the principles and priorities to provide Nova Scotians with disabilities with full citizenship and independence in an inclusive society. Now we certainly haven't gotten all our own way but we've found this initiative to have had a significant influence on government policy formation and it is continuing.

#8. Caucus research papers - NSLEO provides a voice and consumer perspective on provincial issues. In that regard, we prepare an annual position paper on key areas of interest and we include recommendations for change or implementation to better the lives of Nova Scotians with disabilities. We are called upon to present these papers and recommendations to all three political caucuses in Nova Scotia and we have seen several recommendations implemented as a result of our work.

#9. Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities & Seniors- NSLEO led a committee consisting of emergency response professionals, government representatives and various community partners in the development of an information program (booklet and Training program) that helped to provide information to individuals with cross disabilities and seniors to enable them to be prepared in case of an emergency or disaster. That Work continued to develop a training program in partnership with our local EMO to provide training across the province in a cross-disability format so that the information was accessible to everyone who needed it.

#10. United Nations disability treaty education. This is an initiative of our national organization, the Canadian Council on Disabilities (CCD) of which (NSLEO) is a provincial affiliate and thus very supportive. In August 2006, after more than a decade of negotiation, consensus was finally reached on wording for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

NSLEO played a role as a catalyst in this international process by introducing 2 of the treaty's negotiators (both from Nova Scotia) to Canada's new Foreign Minister (also from Nova Scotia). They got him interested, with the result that Canada signed in March 2007 on the first day it was open for signatures.

Now, NSLEO continues to seek ways to promote provisions laid down in that international treaty.

The Charities Report only provides so much room so some initiatives were omitted such as those related to disability concerns around tourism and positive aging..

#11. Founder of the Accessible NS committee now lead by TIANS Tourism Industry Association of NS.

#12 In 2008, we were asked to participate and very involved in many public forums held across NS to create a NS positive aging strategy. While that activity has reduced it continues to be a disability concern for NSLEO. **Note:** NS rural pop over 65 will double in 2026. (See HANDOUT #4)

If you look at the circle graph you will see our Revenues are broken down to

- 14% Receipted Donations,
- 37% Government Funding, and
- 49% from Other Charities.

The 14% is monies donated to be given out to deserving students with disabilities as part of the PAANS events. The 37% is all provincial government funding to assist us to pay a staff person and to administer the PAANS week of activities. The 49% is actually federal funding which has been funnelled to us through The Canadian Council on Disabilities (CCD) and this is the amount that the federal government has decided to reduce by 1/3rd this year, by another third next year and down to zero in future years.

But you cannot cut staff below one and still have a meaningful organization so next year and the following years are big question marks....

Other disability organizations have similarly had their funding cut so we will be in discussion with them. (NSLEO) in the past has been good at forming productive partnerships that work so maybe we can do so again. We will try and hope for the best.

In closing, let me say

- that our board will include as many of the disability groups that are getting cut to our board structure,

What is our ask or need ?.....It is \$\$\$\$ (Dollars)

We could not have done the above without \$ (Dollars) for us across the province, to meet face to face twice a year to help put the right policy into place and to educate ourselves and others on the many complex issues.

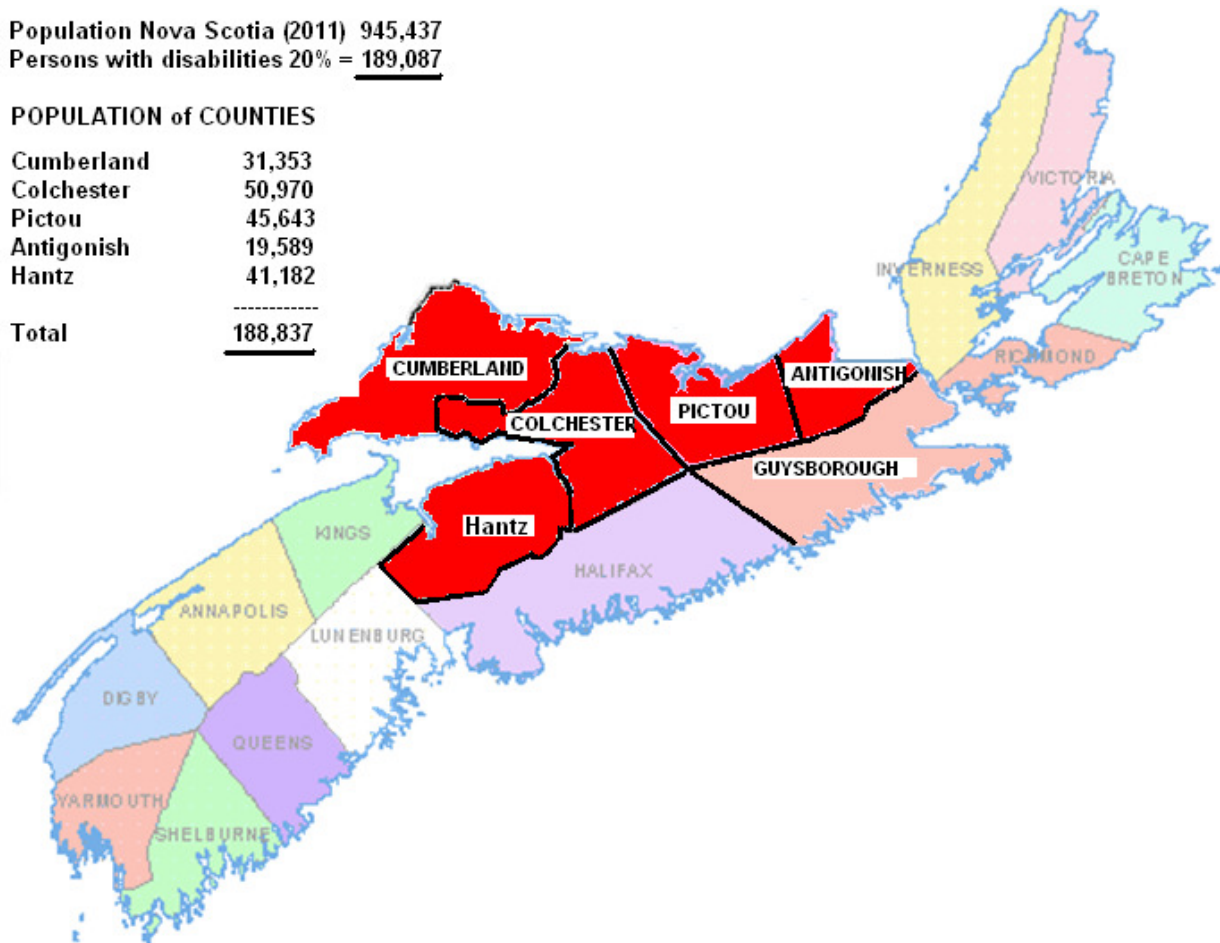
Thank you for your time and consideration.

HANDOUT #1 FOR NSLEO PRESENTATION TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES - MAY 7, 2013

Population Nova Scotia (2011) 945,437
Persons with disabilities 20% = 189,087

POPULATION of COUNTIES

Cumberland	31,353
Colchester	50,970
Pictou	45,643
Antigonish	19,589
Hantz	41,182
Total	<u>188,837</u>





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NOVA SCOTIA LEAGUE FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES (NS LEO) - Quick View

[Registration](#) no.: 119063477RR0001

Designation: [Charitable Organization](#)

Web site: WWW.NOVASCOTIALEO.ORG

Programs and activities:

1. Provincial access awareness and disability [student scholarships](#); 2. Poverty Reduction Strategy; 3. Wheelchairs for children & adults; 4. Disability Information Sharing Sessions; 5. Disabled & Seniors Community Based Transit; 6. Public and Member Disability Education; 7. Provincial Disability Strategy; 8. Preparing Provincial Caucus Research Papers; 9. Disability Emergency Preparedness; 10. United Nations Disability Treaty education.

The Nova Scotia League for Equal Opportunities (NSLEO) is always ready and prepared to face new challenges and take on new programs in the disability community as these arise.

Status

☒ Registered 1983-04-01

Reporting periods

Select:

Quick View	Full View
► 2012-03-31 ◀	2012-03-31
2011-03-31	2011-03-31
	2010-03-31
	2009-03-31
	2008-03-31

Revenue



- Receipted donations \$21,500 (14%)
- Non-receipted donations (0%)
- Gifts from other charities \$73,500 (49%)
- Government funding \$56,000 (37%)
- All other revenue \$82 (0%)

Total revenue: \$151,082

Expenses



- Charitable program \$126,245 (81%)
- Management and administration \$29,147 (19%)
- [Gifts to other registered charities and qualified donees](#) \$0 (0%)
- Other \$0 (0%)
(Including any fundraising and political activities)

Total expenses: \$155,392

Compensation

Total compensation for all positions \$75,436

Full-time employees 2

Ten highest compensated full-time positions

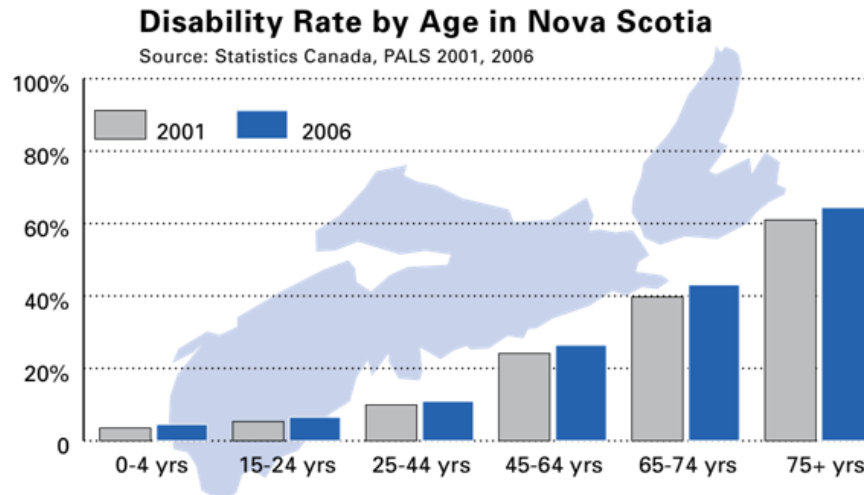
Less than \$40,000	2
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HANDOUT #3 FOR NSLEO PRESENTATION TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES - MAY 7, 2013

<h2>RTA Member Organizations</h2>	
<p>CHAD Transit (CHAD) Catchment Area: Pictou County</p>	
<p>Colchester Transportation Co-operative Ltd. (CTCL) Catchment Area: Colchester County</p>	
<p>Municipality of the District of Chester (Community Wheels) Catchment Area: Municipality of the District of Chester</p>	
<p>Cumberland County Transportation Service (CCTS) Catchment Area: Cumberland County</p>	<p>Sou'West Nova Transit Association (SWNT) * Catchment Area: Shelburne County</p>
<p>East Hants Community Rider (Community Rider) Catchment Area: East Hants County</p>	<p>Strait Area Transit Co-operative Ltd. (SAT) Catchment Area: Richmond/Inverness Counties</p>
<p>HOPE Dial-A-Ride (HOPE) Catchment Area: Yarmouth County</p>	<p>Trans County Transportation Society (TCTS) Catchment Area: Annapolis/Western Kings Counties</p>
<p>Kings Point-To-Point Transit (KPPT) Catchment Area: Central/Eastern Kings County</p>	<p>Transport de Clare Catchment Area: Digby County</p>
<p>MusGo Rider Co-operative Ltd. * Catchment Area: Jeddore, Musquodoboit Harbour, Chezzetcook and Porters Lake</p>	<p>West Hants Dial-A-Ride Catchment Area: West Hants County</p>

HANDOUT #4

FOR NSLEO PRESENTATION TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES - MAY 7, 2013



	2001 Rate %	2006 Rate %
0-14 years	3.5	4.5
15-24 years	5.3	6.5
25-44 years	9.9	10.9
45-64 years	24.1	26.4
65-74 years	39.7	43.1
75+ years	61.0	64.4

NSLEO is very concerned when we look at these figures. You can see that disability rates rise very significantly as our population ages and the number of people over 65 in rural areas of Nova Scotia is predicted to double by 2026.

So it is very important to keep up our efforts to help build the capacity of these disabled people in our rural areas to provide self help as governments will surely play a significant role but will not be able to do it all.