



THE PREMIER
Halifax, Nova Scotia

September 14, 2021

Honourable Tim Halman
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Chair of Treasury and Policy Board

Dear Minister Halman,

Thank you for agreeing to serve Nova Scotians as Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Chair of Treasury and Policy Board.

Governing is about people. On August 17th, 2021, we were given a mandate by Nova Scotians to activate solutions. They responded to our platform, *Solutions for Nova Scotians*, and its vision for our Province. Nova Scotians share the hope you and I have for our beautiful province and its potential.

A brighter future starts with a shared belief in what our province can do. A belief in each other. A belief in our communities. A belief in fellow Nova Scotians. We can put Nova Scotians on the path to financial sustainability and fix healthcare. We can support our traditional industries and build an environment plan that fights climate change. We can make our province a magnet for doctors, students, new residents, investors and tourists alike, and remain proud of our traditions and our heritage.

Fixing healthcare and rebuilding our economy is not for the faint of heart. It will require strong leadership and a willingness to take bold action. Working together, we can get the job done.

The success of all Nova Scotians and improvement of their health, access to health care and quality of life will be our collective success.

We have committed to listen to and respect all Nova Scotians. We have also committed to lead a government which represents all Nova Scotians and is reflective of the modern societal makeup of Nova Scotia, inclusive and respectful of all demographic, cultural and ethnic diversities to advance our collective growth and prosperity.

You have been chosen for Cabinet because of your track record and capabilities as a problem solver, as a “solutionist,” as someone who gets things done and is not deterred by complexity. You are a known collaborator who will work with your colleagues on solutions that need all the capabilities of the Government and the public service pulling in the same direction.

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As Minister, your leadership and your team will play a critical role in contributing to the commitments we have made and to providing solutions. You are responsible for the conduct of the department(s) you oversee and must be aware of and adhere to the public service's *Code of Conduct and Respectful Workplace Policy* in your interactions with the public service. Most importantly, you are part of a team of solutionists who share a common vision and commitment to *Solutions for Nova Scotians*.

As Minister of Environment and Climate Change you will:

- Within the first 90 days of your mandate, prepare a timeline for completion of all tasks below over the next four years. The initial timelines are to be updated quarterly thereafter.

New Enviro-Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act

- During the first Legislative sitting, introduce new environmental legislation - the Enviro-Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act (EGCCRA) - which will guide Nova Scotia towards a cleaner and healthier environment in the coming decade (and beyond) and will further encourage growth of the sustainable and green economy and the sustainability of traditional industries.
- Work with your Ministerial colleagues with respect to elements of the Enviro-Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act which are reflected in their respective mandate letters.
- Assume responsibility for implementing aspects of the Enviro-Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act for which primary responsibility has been assigned to you.
- Set the following environmental and economic goals for the Province to achieve long term objectives:
 - Implement the Independent Review of Forestry Practices (the "Lahey Report").
 - Protect at least 20% of the total land and water mass of Nova Scotia for nature conservation by 2030. This "Protected Areas" network will now include Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas.
 - Support low-impact, sustainable aquaculture by implementing a proper licensing process that places much weight on environmental considerations and includes provincial regulation for potential environmental impacts, animal welfare, fish health and/or pest control product sale and use.
 - Update the environmental impact assessment process to consider the cumulative impacts of any development that would potentially affect wetlands, rivers, lakes, or other aquatic environments.
 - Support and encourage local food consumption, with the goal of 20% of the money spent on food by Nova Scotians being spent on locally produced food by 2030.
 - Update existing environmental decision-making process to include diversity, inclusion, and equity. You will accomplish this by amending the Environmental assessment legislation to give voice to diverse and equity seeking communities.
 - Build climate change adaptive capacity and resilience by prioritizing climate adaptation across every government department and ensuring that all Nova Scotia municipalities have sufficient resources to take immediate and long-term action on their adaptation priorities.
 - Commit to 80% of electricity needs being supplied by renewable energy by 2030.
 - Work with the auto and gas service industries to sell 30% zero-emission vehicles by 2030.
 - Ensure that new provincial buildings are net-zero and that all major provincial building retrofits will be low-carbon, reducing embodied carbon and ensuring 75% of domestic office floor space (new leases and lease renewals) will be in net-zero carbon climate resilient buildings starting in

2030.

- Enshrine in legislation a mandate that all new government buildings and any major renovations must be net-zero will help to decrease our GHGs over time.
- Encourage the private sector to follow the government's lead by working with property developers to establish grants to reduce the increased cost that may be associated with building net-zero buildings.
- Actively encourage innovative, green and sustainability focused businesses to get established or relocate to the province and provide access to early stage investment for innovative, sustainable and green business start ups.
- Work with established, new and small businesses across the province and in all sectors to get their feedback on all potential ways to further enable them taking actions to reduce emissions, including through rebates, targeted investments, and other supports.
- Continue to support and strengthen Efficiency Nova Scotia to meet our identified clean energy goals.
- Actively pursue federal funding programs that enhance environmental and economic sustainability and commit to working in partnership with municipalities, First Nations, businesses, researchers, community groups and non-profit organizations and post-secondary institutions to continue to position Nova Scotia as a world leader in sustainable development.

Environmental Education

- Support the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development to ensure that part of the science curriculum includes a focus on the environment and climate change. Our students should be armed with the knowledge of:
 - How their actions affect the environment and climate change;
 - How changes in the environment affect others;
 - Why they should care about recycling and sustainability;
 - How they can do their part.

Department of Environment

- Establish blue ribbon panels of subject matter experts to assess complex applications to ensure our environment is protected with the highest level of scrutiny.
- Employ a funding navigator within the Department of Environment to help support businesses and individuals seeking to apply for federal funding programs.

Penalize Environmental Offenders

- Strive to make Nova Scotia the most environmentally friendly jurisdiction in North America.
- Establish the highest penalties for littering in Canada.
- Enact the Litterbug Act, legislation that will establish provincial penalties for littering (as defined under the Environment Act) and embark on an advertising campaign to inform Nova Scotians.

As Minister of Environment and Climate Change, you will also support your Ministerial colleagues as they execute their responsibilities. In particular, you will support:

- The Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables as they work towards 80% of Nova Scotia's electricity needs being supplied by renewable energy by 2030.

- The Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables as they work with the auto and gas service industries to sell 30% zero-emission vehicles by 2030.
- The Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture to support low-impact, sustainable aquaculture.
- The Minister of Economic Development as they actively encourage innovative, sustainable and green businesses to establish or relocate to the province and provide access to financing for innovative, sustainable and green business start ups.
- The Minister of Economic Development as they convene discussions with the province's major industry leaders - agriculture, fishing, forestry, etc. to determine what steps they can take to make more environmentally conscious progress.
- The Minister of Economic Development as they work with small businesses across the province and in all sectors to get their feedback on all potential ways to further support them in taking actions to reduce emissions, including through rebates, targeted investments, and other supports.
- The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs as I actively pursue federal funding programs that enhance environmental and economic sustainability and commit to working in partnership with municipalities, First Nations, businesses, community groups, researchers and non-profit organizations and post-secondary institutions to continue to position Nova Scotia as a world leader in sustainable development.
- The Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables as they work to protect at least 20% of the total land and water mass of Nova Scotia by 2030.

As we progress through our mandate, we will work together to identify further refinement and priorities of focus.

Within the first six months, and as part of your Department's mandate, you will work with me and other Departments in reviewing the role and effectiveness of Agencies, Offices and Crown Corporations with a goal of ensuring the most efficient and accountable methodology for the undertaking of their respective tasks.

We have a clear mandate and the vision and the determination to take decisive action to solve problems for people by giving them hope for health, universal mental health care, dignity for our seniors and a new opportunity for aging well. We will invest in our future. We will build a Nova Scotia with more people, more jobs, better jobs and more housing and infrastructure for people. We will do this with an overriding commitment to sustainable prosperity, establishing Nova Scotia as a world leader.

We will overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of achieving the incredible opportunities within our reach to improve the well-being and quality of life every Nova Scotian deserves.

I look forward to working with you to improve the lives of all the people of Nova Scotia and change the course of our Province now and for generations to come.

Sincerely,



Honourable Tim Halman

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Honourable Tim Houston, M.L.A.

Premier of Nova Scotia

Copy to: Scott Farmer, Deputy Minister of Environment and Climate Change
 Jason Hollett, Associate Deputy Minister of Environment and Climate Change