



THE PREMIER  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

September 14, 2021

Honourable Allan MacMaster  
Deputy Premier  
Deputy President of the Executive Council  
Minister of Finance and Treasury Board  
Minister of Labour Relations  
Minister of Gaelic Affairs

Dear Minister MacMaster,

Thank you for agreeing to serve Nova Scotians as Deputy Premier, Deputy President of the Executive Council, Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, Minister of Labour Relations and Minister of Gaelic Affairs.

Governing is about people. On August 17<sup>th</sup>, 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.

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 Finance and Treasury Board 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.
- Implement the Better Pay Cheque Guarantee. Whatever is paid in provincial corporate tax, as a five-year pilot program, the province will return 50% of it to the corporation the next year as a subsidy, provided it is paid to their employees in accordance with the program.
- Implement the More Opportunities for Skilled Trades (MOST). No provincial personal income tax on the first \$50,000 of earnings for anyone working in the construction industry who is under the age of 30.
- Implement an annual tax credit to parents for enrollment and registration fees for sports and the arts.
- Implement a onetime tax credit to individuals who adopt a dog from a recognized adoption agency.
- Implement an additional, provincial deed transfer tax on any Nova Scotia property purchased by individuals who do not pay taxes in Nova Scotia.
- Impose a levy on every non-Nova Scotian taxpayer held property in Nova Scotia of an additional \$2 per \$100 of assessed property value.
- Negotiate with the Federal Government for increased health transfers.
- Negotiate with the Federal Government to allow Nova Scotia to keep and expand the federal portion of the physician retirement fund taxable benefit, to be reinvested in health care in our Province.

As Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, you will also support your Ministerial colleagues as they execute their responsibilities. In particular, you will support:

- The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development as they review and develop curriculum related to Financial Literacy.
- The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development as they develop an education travel tax credit for families who have to travel outside of their bussing and school districts to attend the IB program.
- The Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care as they offer support to seniors through at home funding and the building of long-term care beds.
- The Minister of Health and Wellness as they establish a retirement fund for full time physicians who practice patient-facing services and match a portion of their retirement savings contributions.
- The Minister of Health and Wellness as they establish financial supports for individuals trying to start a family and paying for fertility services in Nova Scotia.
- The Minister of Economic Development as they implement the Nova Scotia Loyal program.
- The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing as they renegotiate the Memorandum of Understanding with the Municipalities.
- The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing as they double the equalization payment for the first year, until a new Memorandum of Understanding with the municipalities can be reached.

As Minister responsible for Labour Relations, you will:

- Remain committed to fair and open negotiations and engage in meaningful negotiations with unions.

As Minister responsible for Labour Relations, you will also support your Ministerial colleagues as they execute their responsibilities. In particular, you will support:

- The Minister of Health and Wellness as they expand operating room hours and ensure that any new hours are consistent with the terms and conditions of the collective agreement with the Nurses' Union and with other support services, such as environmental service providers (cleaners, porters, sterilization).
- The Minister of Health and Wellness to establish conflict resolution policies for health workers.

As Minister of Gaelic Affairs, 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.
- Promote Gaelic's value and contribution to the province.
- Support innovative language and cultural programs that meet the needs of the Gaelic community and facilitate dialogue with government and community partners on strategies and policies that support Gaelic development.
- Lead the creation of learning materials for use by instructors and Gaelic learners.
- Assist and support community initiatives and projects and collaborate with international partners to increase Gaelic learning opportunities and cultural exchanges.

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Houston". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T" and a long horizontal stroke.

Honourable Tim Houston, M.L.A.

Premier of Nova Scotia

Copy to:            Laura Lee Langley, Deputy Minister of Executive Council Office  
                         Kelliann Dean, Deputy Minister Finance and Treasury Board  
                         Geoff Gatien, Associate Deputy Minister Finance and Treasury Board  
                         Andrea Anderson, Public Service Commissioner  
                         Justin Huston, Deputy Minister of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage  
                         Melissa MacKinnon, Associate Deputy Minister of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage