



THE PREMIER
Halifax, Nova Scotia

September 14, 2021

Honourable Tory Rushton
Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables

Dear Minister Rushton,

Thank you for agreeing to serve Nova Scotians as Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables.

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.

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 Natural Resources and Renewables, 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 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. These “Protected Areas” will now include Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas.
- Implement the Nova Scotia Our Parks and Protected Areas Plan through an Order-in-Council.
- Provide options for regulated wildlife centres to rehabilitate bears and orphaned bear cubs.
- Amend the Crown Lands Act to increase the fine for the offence of dumping or depositing materials on Crown lands, without legal justification or the permission of the Minister.
- Commit to 80% of Nova Scotia’s 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.
- Offer rebates, during the first year of our government, of up to 50 percent of the installation cost to service providers on the install of one Electric Vehicle charging station.
- Support and strengthen Efficiency Nova Scotia to meet our identified clean energy goals.
- Encourage the private sector to follow government lead by working with property developers to establish grants to reduce the increased cost that may be associated with building net-zero buildings.
- Explore preferential electricity rates for onshore aquaculture.

As Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables, you will also support your Ministerial colleagues as they execute their responsibilities. In particular, you will support the:

- The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development as they review and update curriculum related to environmental stewardship.
- The Minister of Environment and Climate as they develop and introduce the Enviro-Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act.
- The Minister of Environment and Climate Change as they build climate change adaptive capacity and resilience across every government department.
- 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 and non-profit organizations, researchers and institutions to continue to position Nova Scotia as a world leader in sustainable development.
- 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 focus on innovation driven, green and sustainable

businesses and partner with Municipalities, universities and our community college, the private sector and equity finance to enable entrepreneurs to start and scale their businesses in all parts of the province and our distinct regions based on their comparative advantages.

- 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 Municipal Affairs and Housing as they develop a full inventory of lands owned and identify areas that could be used for housing.

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, flowing style.

Honourable Tim Houston, M.L.A.

Premier of Nova Scotia

Copy to: Karen Gatien, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables