

October 24, 2014

Halifax Regional Council

City Hall

1841 Argyle Street, Main Floor

PO Box 1749

Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

Good Afternoon Mayor Savage and Councillors,

I watched your budget deliberations earlier this week with considerable interest. I was disappointed to see that you instructed staff to proceed with a 1.8% increase in the average residential and commercial tax bills for the 2015 budget. While this increase is in line with inflation, a tax increase is a tax increase and increasing prices as a result of inflation is a luxury not all of our members have.

We do appreciate that you are considering raising average commercial and residential tax bills by an equal amount and we acknowledge that this increase is less than years past. Nevertheless we have a long standing commitment to advocate for reducing the tax burden and we cannot support the direction Council has recommended.

Your decision to direct staff to prepare a zero percent alternative budget was a good one, and we urge you to take a long hard look at this option and consider taking a strong stand for a competitive business environment by not raising average property tax bills next year.

Sincerely,



Valerie A. Payn
President and CEO