

April 10, 2008

Mr. Stephen Greene
Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of the Premier
1 Government Place
1700 Granville St., 7th Floor
Halifax, NS B3J 3T3

Dear Mr. Greene:

Thank you for your letter of April 7, 2008. I very much appreciate you taking the time to respond to our position re provincial year-end spending and diverting crown share revenues from provincial debt repayment towards new spending.

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce has been a long time advocate of debt repayment and, in these sound economic times, it would seem the prudent approach for our province.

When I received your letter, we reviewed our website content and feel comfortable that, based on our February pre-budget meeting with Minister Baker and departmental staff who did not indicate any additional revenues were anticipated and in fact stated that the "cupboard was bare", that the year-end funds were indeed a windfall.

We have given the Province full points for bringing in balanced budgets, and have stated so repeatedly - publicly and in writing. However, we continue to raise concerns - year over year- with spending increases.

As you requested, your letter has been forwarded to our Board of Directors today, and will be posted on our website tomorrow with a note to share your viewpoint with all Chamber members, with a link in our next e-newsletter.

Again, Stephen, thank you for your letter. We have, over the past years, developed good two way dialogue with the Premier's office, Ministers, Deputy Ministers and departmental staff and look forward to keeping these channels of communication and information exchange very open in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Valerie Payn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Valerie A. Payn
President & CEO

