



**2019-2020 Provincial Budget Response:
SPENDING OVER INFLATION, NEW TAX CREDITS FOR BUSINESSES
March 26th, 2019**

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce was pleased to see a \$33.6 million surplus in the 2019-2020 Budget but remain concerned that provincial spending (over 4%) outpaces inflation and population growth. Health spending consumes almost half the provincial budget – but we question whether more spending will solve public concerns.

There were some positives in the 2019-2020 budget for our members:

- Since its launch in 2015, the Graduate to Opportunity (GTO) program has funded close to 800 full-time positions in over 500 different employers.
- New \$500,000 funding for a new municipal program to create new opportunities for youth.
- Nova Scotia's immigration retention rate has doubled in 15 years, now sitting at 71%.
- Our population is increasing and is at an historic 965,382

"The Chamber is pleased to hear the government has added \$500,000 to incubators and accelerators for a new total of \$1.5 million to build a local, innovation-driven, and high growth environment for businesses." says Patrick Sullivan, President & CEO of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce. "We are happy to hear that Research Nova Scotia will formally take shape this year, with a goal to fund research that benefits Nova Scotian citizens and help our researchers attract more funding and hire more youth. We remain committed to ensuring our members are up-to-date on funding programs and grants. The Chamber fully supports programs that allow our youth to find meaningful work in the province."

We are happy to hear of Nova Scotia's new Venture Capital Tax credit which will encourage individuals and companies to invest in managed funds that support new and growing businesses, and the Innovation Equity Corporate Tax credit which will allow companies to make direct equity investments in other small & medium businesses. A new personal tax credit of up to \$250,000 will encourage individual Nova Scotians to invest in Nova Scotian enterprises.

The Chamber is glad to hear the NS government is providing \$60 million for an accelerated capital cost allowance to help NS businesses write off their capital investments more quickly. We are happy to hear the NS government has surpassed its regulatory burden target of \$25 million by more than \$9 million, saving businesses \$34 million each year.

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce will continue to monitor spending and funding from the provincial government and remain committed to ensuring our members' voices are heard, and they have a business environment that promotes growth and prosperity.