

CALL TO ACTION

Nova Scotians Should Be Alarmed!

February 22, 2000

The Problem

In his State of the Province address in November, Premier Hamm told us that "the economy is in good shape, the government is not." The Chamber fully agrees with this assessment - and is raising the alarm.

With \$813 million in debt service charges this year alone, the only action which can protect health care and education is to cut government spending, bring our budget to a surplus, and begin to pay down the debt.

The Solution

1) Act now

Nova Scotia is broke and must act now to fix this.

We need all of our elected representatives, whether in government or in opposition, to show strong leadership and help Nova Scotians make the necessary changes to secure our financial future.

2) Don't raise taxes!

Some organizations have suggested raising taxes as a solution. The Chamber rejects that -- higher taxes will simply jeopardize our strong economy. The answer is to reduce spending and keep costs under control.

3) Spend less, smarter!

Throwing money at the problem is not the answer. Despite federal cutbacks and popular belief to the contrary, health care spending has risen by over \$400 million since 1996. This is not sustainable. We must find ways to reduce health care spending but improve the health results.

We need fewer departments and less government. There are many things government does not need to do, including the maintenance of public buildings, issuing of licenses and permits, and payroll processing and printing.

Immediate exit from such for-profit businesses as the Nova Scotia Liquor Commission, provincial hotels, and Nova Scotia Resources Ltd. is essential.

There will be job losses, but fewer government jobs is a good thing. A growing private sector will more than compensate for public sector cuts.

In fact, the private sector in Atlantic Canada absorbed ALL of the government job losses of the early 1990s and *created 32,700 additional new jobs.*

These private sector jobs were created by a strong, vibrant and diversified business community that does not need government money. By ceasing grants, loans, and loan guarantees to business, government could make \$40 million available annually to help address the financial crisis we face.

Take Action

In order to convince the government to take action now to address the serious fiscal threat we face, the Chamber encourages you to personally:

1) **Contact the Premier, the Minister of Finance, their Cabinet colleagues and your local MLA** to express your support for immediate action to reduce spending, refocus government on essential services and avoid tax increases. See the following contact information or take advantage of the latest technology and, with a few mouseclicks, send your message by going to:
www.halifaxchamber.com/action/index.cfm

2) **Urge your colleagues and clients to voice their support** for making the choices necessary to secure the health and education system that their children will need in the coming years.

3) **Make the facts available to your employees** and encourage them to consider the threat to health care, education and other services that increased taxes and continued spending represent.

For further information on the Chamber's position on restructuring the provincial government, or on our response to the Voluntary Planning Report, please contact Nancy Conrad or Charles Cirtwill at the Chamber office at 468-7111 or info@halifaxchamber.com.

Thank you for your support. Together, we can make a difference.



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HOW TO CONTACT YOUR PREMIER, CABINET MINISTERS AND LOCAL MLA
(as of February 22, 2000)

CABINET

NAME		EMAIL	PHONE	FAX
Hon. John Hamm	Premier	premier@gov.ns.ca	424-6600	424-7648
Hon. Neil Leblanc	Min. of Finance	fina.leblannj@gov.ns.ca	424-5720	424-0635
Hon. Gordon Balsler	Min. of Ec. Dev.	balserg@gov.ns.ca	424-5790	424-0514
Hon. Jamie Muir	Min. of Health	healmin@gov.ns.ca	424-3377	424-0559
Hon. Michael Baker	Min. of Justice	bakermg@gov.ns.ca	424-4044	424-0510
Hon. Jane Purves	Min. of Education	purvesja@gov.ns.ca	424-4236	424-0680
Hon. Ernie Fage	Min. of Agric./Nat Res	min_dof@gov.ns.ca	424-8953	424-0699
Hon. Peter Christie	Min. of Commun. Serv.	christpg@gov.ns.ca	424-4304	424-0618
Hon. Ron Russell	Min. of Transportation	russellr@gov.ns.ca	424-5875	424-0171
Hon. John Chataway	Min. of Environment	chatawaj@gov.ns.ca	424-2358	424-0644
Hon. Angus MacIsaac	Min. of Housing	macisaaa@gov.ns.ca	424-5550	424-0581
Hon. Rod. MacDonald	Min. of Tourism/Culture	macdonr@gov.ns.ca	424-4855	424-6782

METRO HALIFAX MLA'S

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