

HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Election Information and Questions from the Business Community

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce together with the approximately 1,500 member businesses and their over 90,000 employees, acts as a single powerful voice to promote local business interests.

Election Information

Election Date: Election Day is October 19th and advanced polling is available on October 9th-12th

Registration: You can register to vote [here](#) as well as confirm or update your registration.

ID Requirements: You can view Elections Canada's new voter ID requirements [here](#). Almost any piece of ID with your address will work and options are available for those who cannot meet this requirement

Polling Stations and More Information: Polling station locations will be released shortly and can be found on Elections Canada's website (www.elections.ca), as well as lots of other information.

What Are the Important Issues for the Business Community in the 2015 Federal Election?

October 19th's federal election is fast approaching and it is shaping up to be the closest election in recent memory. It is more important than ever for you to make an informed choice and to get out and vote on Election Day. To help you engage with your local candidates and make your choice, here are eight questions for you to ask candidates this election season. These questions reflect the [Halifax Chamber's strategic plan](#) goal of Halifax being a top three economic growth city by 2018. The Chamber is a completely non-partisan organization and does not endorse candidates from any party.

1) Do you support keeping the federal tax burden low for business?

Our thoughts: Nova Scotia has one of the highest commercial tax burdens in Canada and it would be a major step backward for the federal government to increase the cost of doing business. Attracting more foreign investment is important for Nova Scotia's economy and we do not want to see our competitive position further eroded.

2) What will you do to promote entrepreneurship?

Our thoughts: Building a more entrepreneurial culture is critical for creating sustainable economic growth in Nova Scotia. Tax changes, regulatory reform, education initiatives are all important for encouraging more people to start their own businesses.

3) Will you champion common sense regulations for business?

Our thoughts: Regulation is a major cost for Nova Scotia businesses. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business estimated that regulation cost the Nova Scotia economy \$747 million in 2013. While not all regulation is bad, there is a lot of room for improvement at all levels of government. We are also looking for the federal government to take a leadership role in reducing interprovincial trade barriers. Since Nova Scotia is a small province it is very important for local companies to have unrestricted access to larger markets in the rest of Canada.

4) What will you do to help business capitalize on major projects, like the national shipbuilding procurement strategy, offshore energy exploration, the new Halifax Convention Centre and ocean technology?

Our thoughts: Upcoming major projects are very important for Nova Scotia's economy and we are looking for the federal government to be supportive. In particular, we are looking for all parties to commit to continuing the national shipbuilding procurement strategy in its current form.

5) What actions will you take to support a vibrant downtown core?

Our thoughts: Having a vibrant downtown core helps make cities attractive places to live. The federal government has a large role to play in this area particularly when it comes to infrastructure investment. We are looking for cities, such as Halifax, to get their fair share of federal infrastructure support.

6) How will you help our post-secondary institutions match students and graduates with the needs of employers?

Our thoughts: The post-secondary education sector is changing rapidly and we would like to hear more about what the federal government can do in this area. Making sure that Canada has the workforce required to succeed in the 21st century world economy deserves to be a national priority.

7) What can you do to support the provincial government in strengthening the P-12 education system?

Our thoughts: Nova Scotia's performance on the internationally respected PISA exams has consistently trailed top-performing jurisdictions in Canada and around the world. Our education system is in need of reform and the federal government could help by facilitating the spread of best practices between provinces.

8) What will you do to increase the number of immigrants to Nova Scotia, as well as the retention rates?

Our thoughts: Immigration is almost completely under the control of the federal government and Nova Scotia needs their cooperation to attract and retain more immigrants in our province. Immigration is one of the ways we can help alleviate our demographic problems and we need the federal government to understand our concerns and share our sense of urgency.