



NOV 16 2015

**Municipal Affairs
Office of the Minister**

PO Box 216, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 2M4 • Telephone 902 424-5550 Fax 902 424-0581 • novascotia.ca

NOV 9 2015

Ms. Valerie Payn
President and CEO
Halifax Chamber of Commerce
656 Windmill Road, Suite 200
Dartmouth, NS B3B 1B8

Dear Ms. Payn:

I want to take a moment to follow up on your recent letter of August 11, 2015 with respect to permanent resident voting.

First, I would like to thank you for voicing the Halifax Chamber of Commerce's position regarding permanent resident voting in Halifax. The issue of permanent resident voting is important especially at a time when the issues of immigration and welcoming others to our Province has been elevated by the OneNova Scotia Report and is a priority for our government.

It is true that various countries around the world have a history of permitting permanent residents to vote only. However, as you state in your letter, to allow permanent resident voting at the local level would be precedent setting in Canada. For this reason, we believe a thorough examination of the issue and extensive consultation is required before making such an important change. We are still in dialogue with the Mayor's office on this issue and are waiting to hear back from Council on our recommendations.

I hope that the Chamber and your members will be engaged in these future discussions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zach Churchill".

Zach Churchill
Minister