



PRESS RELEASE

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GREATER MONCTON, HALIFAX CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE CALL FOR RESOLUTION OF COVID-19 BORDER ISSUE

June 23, 2021 – Halifax, NS – Chambers of Commerce in Greater Moncton and Halifax are calling on the premiers of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to work together to resolve differences in public health guidelines which are preventing restoration of a full Atlantic Bubble.

New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs announced last week his province was reopening to the rest of Canada as it moved to the second phase of its reopening plan. Nova Scotia had previously announced it would re-enter the Atlantic Bubble on June 23, but Premier Iain Rankin announced Tuesday modified isolation and testing rules for New Brunswick residents which prevented a Bubble reunion. He said the decision was largely due to New Brunswick's pre-emptive move to open to the rest of the country.

“At the root of this 11th hour decision is a lack of communication between the two premiers and two provinces,” CEO John Wishart of the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Moncton said. “Both of our provinces have been seized by the pandemic for more than 15 months. We are surprised and disappointed at this late point by the lack of unity in the Atlantic region.”

Under the rules announced yesterday by Rankin, even New Brunswick residents who are fully vaccinated will have to isolate upon entering Nova Scotia until they have received a negative PCR COVID-19 test. By comparison, P.E.I. and Newfoundland residents are not subject to isolation or Nova Scotia Safe Check-In guidelines.

“Visitors from New Brunswick are a significant part of the tourism economy in Nova Scotia. Presenting a last-minute barrier through isolation to New Brunswickers has resulted in significant cancellations of bookings and revenue for Nova Scotia businesses. At a time that covid cases are declining in every province in Canada and Nova Scotia has over 71% first vaccination, through conversation, I believe the Premiers could have come to a middle ground,” said Patrick Sullivan, President & CEO of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce.

The modified isolation and testing will be especially tough on the border communities of Sackville and Amherst, which share many business and family connections.

Wishart and Sullivan agreed the lack of communication and coordination will have a serious impact on business, with hotel rooms cancelled, restaurants and tourism operators negatively impacted, and pending regional air connections affected.

They noted both New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have similar – and declining – case numbers and their first and second dose vaccination rates are comparable and quickly climbing.

The Chamber CEOs made a joint appeal to political and public health leaders on both sides of the border to meet, resolve differences and restore the full Atlantic Bubble to the benefit of both provinces as quickly and safely as possible.

The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Moncton is a nationally accredited Chamber with more than 800 members representing close to 35,000 people. We are the 'Voice of Business in Greater Moncton' with a vision to 'inspire growth'. We engage our members through benefits, events and vigorous advocacy.

Representing over 1,750 businesses and approximately 65,000 Members, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce is committed to advocating for the conditions in the economy that enhance our members' prosperity.



John Wishart
CEO
Chamber of Commerce for Greater Moncton



Patrick Sullivan
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