



NEWS RELEASE

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TIME FOR ACTION ON TAXES IN TUESDAY'S PROVINCIAL BUDGET

April 18, 2016 - Halifax, NS – The Halifax Chamber of Commerce is hoping the Nova Scotia government will deliver a long-term plan for tax relief in Tuesday's provincial budget. People and business in Nova Scotia continue to pay among the highest tax rates in Canada.

"In last year's budget speech, the Finance Minister of the day promised a tax working group would be put in place to develop a long-term plan for tax relief, but 12 months later nothing has happened," said Robert Batherson, Chair of the Board of Halifax Chamber of Commerce. "If Halifax is going to be a top three growth city in Canada, Chamber members, especially small businesses, need governments to support them with a long-term plan to lower taxes."

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce advanced a number of priorities with Finance and Treasury Board Minister Randy Delorey and the Nova Scotia government in January that reflect the Chamber's 2013-2018 strategic plan. Suggestions included a focus on tax relief, common sense regulations and an open for business attitude.

"It's been a year and a half since Premier Stephen McNeil's government received a report on taxation and regulation from Laurel Broten. While the government has made some progress to create a more positive regulatory environment, Nova Scotians continue to pay sky-high taxes compared to other Canadians," added Batherson. "The Premier keeps urging the private sector to do their part to create jobs and economic activity. It's time for the Premier and his government to do their part to outline a long-term plan for tax relief that will make things easier for business to create jobs. This is even more important in the face of the federal government breaking their election promise last fall to lower taxes for small business."

In his December 2015 letter to Minister Delorey, Premier McNeil directed him to “review options to implement changes to the province’s tax structure to support economic growth.”

Premier McNeil’s mandate letter to Minister Delorey:

https://novascotia.ca/exec_council/pdf/letters/2015-FTB-ENV.pdf

Minister Delorey’s Pre-Budget Speech: <http://novascotia.ca/budget/>

Pre-Budget Submission: <http://halifaxchamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Provincial-Pre-Budget-Submission-2016-2017.pdf>

Through its strategic plan, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce is committed to enhancing the prosperity of its members and to realizing Halifax’s potential to be among the top three highest growth city economies in Canada by 2018.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

Robert Batherson will be at Province House Tuesday afternoon to provide the response from the Halifax Chamber of Commerce on the 2016-2017 Nova Scotia budget.

-30-

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