

From: Karen Beazley
To: [Abraham Zebian](#)
Cc: [PublicOnlyCouncilEmail](#); melissa.mlao@office@gmail.com; dmamin@novascotia.ca
Subject: Letter from John Lohr to Mayors and Wardens
Date: February 13, 2025 2:38:27 PM

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Dear Mayor Abraham Zebian and West Hants Regional Municipal Council,

I am writing with regard to John Lohr's letter to Mayors and Wardens, dated February 11, 2025. Together with Premier Houston's paid advertising in The Chronicle Herald, this letter raises concerns and contradictions. Before deciding whether or not to signal support for reductions in trade barriers and for resource development, I urge Mayor and Council to deeply consider the implications for democracy, the environment, municipal autonomy and authority, and our community.

Given the current economic threats posed by USA-imposed trade tariffs, I agree that reducing inter-provincial trade barriers makes sense. However, I caution that an *a priori*, *carte blanche* expression of support for resource development would pose a dangerous precedent.

I acknowledge that any society needs to use resources to support life and livelihoods. Nonetheless, it is crucial that resource development be carefully planned and managed to ensure it is ecologically sustainable and socially just. Provincial pressure tactics and strong-armed requests for support and approval prior to such considerations are directly opposed and counter to the stated need in the letter to take such steps "carefully and in consultation with our communities."

I caution that any prior signalling of council's "support for greater resource development within our province – by letter or press release" may well be used against you/us in the future. Such a letter may be used by John Lohr or others to counter any future democratically derived conclusions, concerns, or policies arising from careful consideration and consultation within our local communities. Prior and wide-open expressions of approval in effect pre-empt democratic processes, and instead represent an autocratic approach.

In addition to the current political situation, we are facing existential threats to life on earth posed by the climate and biological diversity crises. Scientific studies show that

we are at or beyond planetary limits for both. Any resource development must also maintain and restore our life supporting ecological systems and their ecosystem services. There will be no economy without clean air, water, soil and the diversity of species that comprise the living component of ecological systems. Excessive and poorly sited resource development will further fragment and degrade these systems.

Premier Houston does not have a mandate from the people of Nova Scotia to forge ahead with fast-tracked, intensive and extensive resource extraction and to roll back or disregard carefully considered environmental policies and protections. Premier Houston did not run on these issues, but rather on health care. Further, the Houston government's base of support is thin, receiving only 27% of the votes from registered voters; and he did so by calling an early election in contravention of his own election policy. As evidence that there is not a broad base of support, a vast majority of calls and e-mails to a CBC radio Maritime Noon call-in show earlier this week did not support, and indeed strongly opposed, Premier Houston's scheme to expand resource extraction.

Nova Scotia is a small province with a limited land base. Competing uses of this limited land and water base need to be carefully considered in both ecological and sociological terms and in regard to both long and short term costs and benefits. Decisions made today will impact life for the indefinite future. We need to ensure they result in a liveable environment for our children, all peoples, and all of nature.

I urge Mayor and Council to hold on to your municipal powers, autonomy, and sovereignty to do what is best for our community. I urge you to not signal *carte blanche*, *a priori* support for resource development in the Province, either by letter or press release.

Respectfully,
Karen Beazley

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Karen Beazley
To: [Abraham Zebian](#); [PublicOnlyCouncilEmail](#)
Cc: [melissa.mlaoffice@gmail.com](#); [FinanceMinister@novascotia.ca](#); [dmamin@novascotia.ca](#); [Claudia Chender](#); [premier@novascotia.ca](#); [Blois, Kody - M.P.](#)
Subject: Re: Letter from John Lohr to Mayors and Wardens
Date: February 21, 2025 1:41:16 PM

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Dear Mayor Abraham Zebian and West Hants Regional Municipal Council,

Thank you for your response to my letter of February 13th to you and all council.

In the interim, Tim Houston's government has introduced bills in the legislature that raise grave concerns for me and many others. They are relevant to the issues I raised in my previous letter to you.

- Bill 6 introduces measures such as lifting well-justified bans and reducing environmental and other protection and assessment provisions so as to facilitate fast-tracked resource extraction.
- Bill 1 exacerbates this by reducing opportunities for public and legislative debate, accountability, and transparency. This is also the bill that aims to give the government the power to dismiss the Auditor General without cause and other measures.

These and other introduced bills should be of concern to you and council because they reduce the powers and participation of municipal governments and citizens in decision making with potentially serious and long-term negative impacts on our communities and democracy.

Below, I provide a copy of the letters I have sent to our MLA which outline my concerns. I urge you and all council to read and consider them carefully. I further urge you to NOT provide a letter of support as requested by John Lohr.

Do you support these Bills (1 and 6)?

Further, will you reject John Lohr's request for expression of support as outlined in his letter to you of February 12th (please and thank you)?

I ask you to express these concerns, which many constituents share and that I hope you and council also share, to John Lohr, the Premier, our MLA, and the Leader of the Opposition.

The following are copies of the letters I have sent to our MLA and copied to others.

Feb 19th letter to MLA, copying the Premier, Leader of the Opposition, Finance Minister, and MP, sent in response to introduction of Bills 1 and 6 in the legislature

Dear MLA Melissa Sheehy-Richard,

I do not support Bills 1 and 6 that were introduced yesterday in the legislature, and I urge you to vote against them. Such impactful changes warrant public discussion. These proposed changes were not part of the Progress Conservative's, Tim Houston's or your election platforms.

I really do not think you have the support of the public for these bills. It appears the content of these bills has largely been kept from the public and the media and yet these bills are now being fast-forwarded behind closed doors in the legislature as we speak, with no opportunity for public input. Further, it is my understanding that the media are not being allowed or engaged except under strictly controlled government settings. These are egregious denials of transparency, accountability and democratic processes by this government, including you as our MLA.

Bill 1, which gives the government the power to dismiss the Auditor General without cause and withhold and redact their report, would enact an alarming abdication of financial accountability and transparency. The bill also reverses the government's own fixed-election-date legislation and earlier election promise. Further, it aims to do away with the non-partisan Communications NS and make changes to the Freedom of Information Act to enable the refusal of applications. All of these represent dangerous precedents for accountability, transparency and democracy itself. Such proposed changes warrant broader public discussion.

Bill 6, which repeals the bans on uranium mining and fracking and fast-tracks mining and other resource extractions, is irresponsible and denies past, present and future public processes. Nova Scotia is too small in land mass and too permeated with ground and surface waterways to safely conduct activities such as uranium mining and fracking. Further, fast-tracked resource extraction is not an appropriate response to tariff threats from the USA. Instead, innovative economies based on safe and sustainable value-added products and services are warranted, such as developed through ecological forestry, sustainable fisheries, agriculture and mining, tourism, and educational institutions.

By extension, I do not support the tabled deficit budget that finances the fast-tracking of resource extraction. Rather, the budget should support the development of made-in-NS value-

added products and services, such as from ecological forestry, sustainable fisheries and agriculture, and tourism. Revenues for this should be generated by further taxing the wealthy, both corporations and individuals.

Further, Premier Houston has said the government has no intention of listening to so-called “special interests,” which he seems to characterize primarily as anyone with environmental concerns. It is unfathomable to me how the pros and cons of any proposed resource development policy or project can be considered and discussed without input from environmental experts and communities. This is a problematic approach, given this government says they intend to fast track the resource extractions and developments “that can be done safely”. How can safety be confidently and responsibly defined and determined without inputs from environmental experts at arms-length from industry and government?

The situation we now find ourselves in is exacerbated by the fact that the current government now claims a broad but shallow (pseudo-)majority that does not reflect the majority of the public. Unfortunately, however, this (pseudo-)majority appears to have emboldened and enabled the Premier and conservative MLAs to ignore democratic process and public input. The bills as proposed represent nothing short of a further attempt to consolidate power and exclude community input.

I’m curious as to what your thoughts are on these bills and the government’s behaviours. To me, they are so egregious that I cannot imagine anyone would support them except for the power-and-wealth elite who want to concentrate it further into their own hands, such as developers and resource extraction industries, who are already extremely powerful “special interest” groups whose opinions should be suspect, given their self-serving conflicts of interest. To the outside observer, the government’s actions are more akin to authoritarianism than democracy.

I look forward to your response. I urge you to express my concerns, which are shared by many others who do not feel comfortable writing letters, in the legislature. I also urge you to not support either of these bills.

Respectfully,

Feb 12th letter to MLA in response to Tim Houston’s full front page ad in The Chronicle Herald

Dear Melissa Sheehy-Richard,

I am writing to you to request a meeting in your role as my local MLA as well as Ministerial Assistant to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. Ideally, I would like to meet with you in person, but a telephone or Teams conversation may be more feasible given the pending sitting of the House. I would also then like to meet with you in person when you are back in Windsor.

In the interim, I am expressing via this email message my concern about the content of Premier Tim Houston's paid advertising in The Chronical Herald on January 25. As my MLA, and as Ministerial Assistant to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I hope you will express these concerns during the sitting of the House. I also hope that you will bear my concerns in mind in carrying out your other duties as MLA and Ministerial Assistant.

First, as a citizen who has also had a long career in environmental sciences, both social and natural, I am concerned that this government may consider environmental issues and advocates as "special interests" with "outsized voice in policy creation." We are in a period of both climate and biodiversity crises. These are fundamental components of our life support system. There will be no economy if our ecological life support system and its associate ecosystem services fail. It is well established in science that we are at or beyond planetary limits for these crucial systems. As a society and a species we must make immediate transformative changes to restore these life-supporting systems to sustainable levels. Environmental concerns are not "special interests" or "irrational fears." They are central to the continuance of life on earth.

Second, ecological sustainability is crucial to economic sustainability. Any talk of sustainability must be grounded in ensuring ecological sustainability. And to get there, we need to shift to restoring and enhancing ecological systems, not further degrading and fragmenting them. If the next generation is to "be better off than this generation," any resource extraction and development must be done with ecological restoration and protection and careful siting as a fundamental part of the plan.

Third, bans in NS are not "lazy public policy". Bans on fracking and uranium mining and the moratorium on Gorges Bank, for example, are grounded in well-established environmental sciences including those related to human health. They are also the result of extensive public processes and considerations of complex, interrelated factors. Such governance practices and policies are not "lazy", but are rather key tools of best practices in a democracy.

Fourth, the current government was not elected on a platform of ramping up resource extraction. Rather, it was elected on a platform of public health and housing, and on the basis of past promises, such as to protect 20% of NS as parks and protected areas and implement

the ecological forestry recommendations of the so-called Lahey report.

I acknowledge that it is important to pursue responsible opportunities for mining, renewable energy, and other value-added resource-based initiatives. It is equally important, however, that these be carefully planned and sited to ensure they do not destroy the best of what's left for wildlife habitat, especially for species at risk such as American moose and wood turtle, older forests, and other key components of our life-supporting ecological systems.

Finally, I do not support my tax dollars being spent for paid advertising that espouses such a blatantly partisan perspective, especially one that comes across as threatening, bullying and insulting. Such advertisements should be paid for by the PC Party, not by the Government of Nova Scotia.

Especially in your role as Ministerial Assistant to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I urge you to listen carefully to the concerns of those who understand environmental issues. I also urge you to uphold current environmental laws, policies and practices, and work to strengthen those that are needed for ecologically sustainable development and a liveable future, for all peoples and nature. I have ideas for these that I would be happy to discuss with you.

I also urge you to respect and advance Indigenous rights and leadership, especially the Mi'kmaq, the original stewards of this land, and listen to and stand with them in peace and friendship, as treaty people.

I welcome your response and the opportunity to speak with you further about these issues.

Respectfully,

Karen Beazley

From: Abraham Zebian <Mayor.Zebian@westhants.ca>

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 at 3:21 PM

To: Karen Beazley

Cc: PublicOnlyCouncilEmail <allcouncil@westhants.ca>, melissa.mlaoffice@gmail.com <melissa.mlaoffice@gmail.com>, dmamin@novascotia.ca <dmamin@novascotia.ca>

Subject: Re: Letter from John Lohr to Mayors and Wardens

CAUTION: The Sender of this email is not from within Dalhousie.

Thank you for the email Karen.

It will be added to correspondence for Councils information.

Kindest regards.

Mayor Abraham Zebian
West Hants Regional Municipality
76 Morrison Drive, Windsor, NS B0N 2T0
902-790-1566

On Feb 13, 2025, at 2:38 PM, Karen Beazley

Caution [External Email]

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Dear Mayor Abraham Zebian and West Hants Regional Municipal Council,

I am writing with regard to John Lohr's letter to Mayors and Wardens, dated February 11, 2025. Together with Premier Houston's paid advertising in The Chronicle Herald, this letter raises concerns and contradictions. Before deciding whether or not to signal support for reductions in trade barriers and for resource development, I urge Mayor and Council to deeply consider the implications for democracy, the environment, municipal autonomy and authority, and our community.

Given the current economic threats posed by USA-imposed trade tariffs, I agree that reducing inter-provincial trade barriers makes sense. However, I caution that an *a priori*, *carte blanche* expression of support for resource development would pose a dangerous precedent.

I acknowledge that any society needs to use resources to support life and livelihoods. Nonetheless, it is crucial that resource development be carefully planned and managed to ensure it is ecologically sustainable and socially just.

Provincial pressure tactics and strong-armed requests for support and approval prior to such considerations are directly opposed and counter to the stated need in the letter to take such steps “carefully and in consultation with our communities.”

I caution that any prior signalling of council’s “support for greater resource development within our province – by letter or press release” may well be used against you/us in the future. Such a letter may be used by John Lohr or others to counter any future democratically derived conclusions, concerns, or policies arising from careful consideration and consultation within our local communities. Prior and wide-open expressions of approval in effect pre-empt democratic processes, and instead represent an autocratic approach.

In addition to the current political situation, we are facing existential threats to life on earth posed by the climate and biological diversity crises. Scientific studies show that we are at or beyond planetary limits for both. Any resource development must also maintain and restore our life supporting ecological systems and their ecosystem services. There will be no economy without clean air, water, soil and the diversity of species that comprise the living component of ecological systems. Excessive and poorly sited resource development will further fragment and degrade these systems.

Premier Houston does not have a mandate from the people of Nova Scotia to forge ahead with fast-tracked, intensive and extensive resource extraction and to roll back or disregard carefully considered environmental policies and protections. Premier Houston did not run on these issues, but rather on health care. Further, the Houston government’s base of support is thin, receiving only 27% of the votes from registered voters; and he did so by calling an early election in contravention of his own election policy. As evidence that there is not a broad base of support, a vast majority of calls and e-mails to a CBC radio Maritime Noon call-in show earlier this week did not support, and indeed strongly opposed, Premier Houston's scheme to expand resource extraction.

Nova Scotia is a small province with a limited land base. Competing uses of this limited land and water base need to be carefully considered in both ecological and sociological terms and in regard to both long and short term costs and benefits. Decisions made today will impact life for the indefinite future. We need to ensure they result in a liveable environment for our children, all peoples, and all of nature.

I urge Mayor and Council to hold on to your municipal powers, autonomy, and sovereignty to do what is best for our community. I urge you to not signal *carte blanche, a priori* support for resource development in the Province, either by letter or press release.

Respectfully,
Karen Beazley

From: Karen Beazley
To: premier@novascotia.ca
Cc: [MLA Office](#); [Claudia Chender](#); [Blois, Kody - M.P.](#); [info](#); FinanceMinister@novascotia.ca; [Abraham Zebian](#); [PublicOnlyCouncilEmail](#)
Subject: Bill 6
Date: February 21, 2025 4:45:13 PM

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Premier Tim Houston,

I urge you to retract Bill 6. I have grave concerns about many of its provisions. Such impactful changes warrant public discussion.

Many provisions in Bill 6 were not part of your or your party's election platforms. You do not have a mandate from the people of Nova Scotia to make these wide sweeping changes. Such changes would negatively impact democracy itself by reversing the outcomes of past public processes and fast-tracking developments without adequate protections and attention to the concerns of citizens, municipalities and key experts. Such changes create the conditions for very real negative health implications for the people and the environment in Nova Scotia, as well as for the planet with respect to the existential crises in biodiversity and climate that threaten all of life on earth.

It must be apparent to you given the push back by citizens, including doctors and scientists, and the media that you do not have the support of the public for this bill. The content of this bill had largely been kept from the public and the media prior to the sitting of the legislature and now these bills are being fast-forwarded behind closed doors in the legislature as we speak, with little to no opportunity for prior or current input and feedback. That the media is not being engaged except under strictly government-controlled settings away from the legislature is highly problematic. Individually and cumulatively, these are egregious denials of transparency, accountability and democratic processes by this government, especially by you as Premier.

Bill 6, which repeals the bans on uranium mining and fracking and fast-tracks mining and other resource extractions, is irresponsible and denies past, present and future public processes. **Nova Scotia is too small in land mass, too permeated with ground and surface waterways, and too covered in existing communities and valued land uses to safely conduct activities such as uranium mining and fracking.** Further, hydrologic fracturing cannot be done without massive releases greenhouse gases, which would prevent our ability to meet provincial reduction targets and further exacerbate the

climate crises.

Fast-tracked resource extraction is not an appropriate response to tariff threats from the USA. Instead, innovative economies based on safe and sustainable value-added products and services are warranted, such as developed through ecological forestry, sustainable fisheries, agriculture and mining, tourism, and educational institutions.

By extension, I do not support the tabled deficit budget that finances the fast-tracking of resource extraction. Rather, the budget should support the development of made-in-NS value-added products and services, such as from ecological forestry, sustainable fisheries and agriculture, and tourism. Revenues for these should be generated by further taxing the wealthy, both corporate and individual.

Further, you frequently state that the government has no intention of listening to so-called “special interests” or “professional letter writers,” which you will not explicitly name but seem to characterize primarily as anyone with environmental or human health concerns.

I ask, how can you responsibly determine and consider the pros and cons of any proposed resource development policy or project without input from environmental experts and communities of people concerned about the health of the land, soil, air and water? Surely you are not so naïve as to rely on industry scientists. We know how poorly that tact worked with regard to tobacco smoking.

To fast-track resource extractive developments without meaningful scientific and public engagement is a problematic approach. You says you intend to fast track the resource extractions and developments “that can be done safely”. **But how can safety be confidently and responsibly defined and determined without inputs from environmental experts at arms-length from industry and government?**

The situation we now find ourselves in is exacerbated by the fact that you as Premier and the current government now claim a broad but shallow majority that does not reflect the views of the majority of the public. Unfortunately, however, this (pseudo-)majority appears to have emboldened and enabled you and your conservative MLAs to ignore democratic process and public input. As proposed, Bill 6 appears to be another attempt to consolidate power and exclude community input.

To me, Bill 6 is so egregious that I cannot imagine anyone would support it except for (1) those who do not understand the serious negative ecological and human health

implications and (2) power-and-wealth elites who want to concentrate it further into their own hands, such as developers and resource extraction industries. These latter are already extremely powerful “special interest” lobby groups whose opinions should be suspect, given their self-serving conflicts of interest.

Crucially, we are facing existential threats to life on earth posed by the climate and biological diversity crises. Scientific studies show that we are at or beyond planetary limits for both. Any resource development must also maintain and restore our life supporting ecological systems and their ecosystem services. There will be no economy without clean air, water, soil and the diversity of species that comprise the living component of ecological systems. Excessive and poorly sited resource development will further fragment and degrade these systems.

I look forward to your response. I urge you to seriously consider my concerns, which are shared by many others. I urge you to withdraw and/or dramatically revise Bill 6 to address such concerns.

Respectfully,
Karen Beazley

From: [Abraham Zebian](#)
To: [Karen Beazley](#)
Cc: [PublicOnlyCouncilEmail](#)
Subject: Re: Follow up point, Re: Letter from John Lohr to Mayors and Wardens
Date: February 22, 2025 11:42:34 AM

On Feb 22, 2025, at 11:36 AM, Karen Beazley wrote:

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Mayor and Council,

I beg your attention for two more important points specific to the proposed reduced restrictions on hydraulic fracturing (fracking) and uranium mining in Bill 6.

First, as published in the Halifax Examiner Morning File by Tim Bousquet, Feb 21, 2025:

The “fracking ban” was put in place by former Liberal Energy Minister Andrew Younger, who comments: “The legislation I introduced regarding fracking as Energy Minister and was passed by the legislature did not ban fracking. **It established a requirement for community consent in the areas it may proceed.** That consent might come about in many ways like a council resolution.

By repealing the bill, it is removing the community consent requirement....

As I said at the time of the legislation, I’m agnostic towards fracking. It’s been done well and safely and done really poorly. The issue of land use conflicts for a speculative resource over existing high value resources is a concern. **And what the repeal in the bill [6] really does is remove the requirement for community involvement in what is arguably a community resource.”** (Emphasis added.)

Second, I’ve attached a copy of a letter from the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment to Premier Houston outlining the serious health impacts associated with uranium exploration and mining and hydraulic fracturing

of natural gas in N.S.

Both of these are relevant and real threats in Windsor-West Hants if Bill 6 is passed.

I reiterate my request that you do not provide carte-blanche support for expedited resource extractions, especially in this context where the government is trying to limit municipal and community input and engagement.

Respectfully,
Karen Beazley

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 21, 2025, at 2:43 PM, Karen Beazley wrote:

Thank you for your response and for this information about your meeting.

From: Abraham Zebian <Mayor.Zebian@westhants.ca>
Date: Friday, February 21, 2025 at 2:12 PM
To: Karen Beazley
Cc: PublicOnlyCouncilEmail <allcouncil@westhants.ca>
Subject: Re: Letter from John Lohr to Mayors and Wardens

CAUTION: The Sender of this email is not from within Dalhousie.

Thank you for the follow up Karen.

It will also be included in our correspondence for councils information at our next meeting(Feb. 25).

Council will have its first opportunity to discuss Minister Lohr's letter on Tuesday evening as well as other decisions the current provincial government has made recently.

Until council has those discussions and formulates an opinion, I am not in a position to answer on its behalf. Please join us Tuesday night in person at 76 Morison Drive, Windsor 6pm or online on YouTube for the live stream to listen to the discussion.

Kindest regards.

Mayor Abraham Zebian
West Hants Regional Municipality
76 Morrison Drive
Windsor NS
B0N 2T0
902-790-1566

On Feb 21, 2025, at 1:41 PM, Karen Beazley
wrote:

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Dear Mayor Abraham Zebian and West Hants
Regional Municipal Council,

Thank you for your response to my letter of February
13th to you and all council.

In the interim, Tim Houston's government has
introduced bills in the legislature that raise grave
concerns for me and many others. They are relevant
to the issues I raised in my previous letter to you.

- Bill 6 introduces measures such as lifting well-justified bans and reducing environmental and other protection and assessment provisions so as to facilitate fast-tracked resource extraction.
- Bill 1 exacerbates this by reducing opportunities for public and legislative debate, accountability, and transparency. This is also the bill that aims to give the government the power to dismiss the Auditor General without cause and other measures.

These and other introduced bills should be of concern to you and council because they reduce the powers and participation of municipal governments and citizens in decision making with potentially serious and long-term negative impacts on our communities and democracy.

Below, I provide a copy of the letters I have sent to our MLA which outline my concerns. I urge you and all council to read and consider them carefully. I further urge you to NOT provide a letter of support as requested by John Lohr.

**Do you support these Bills (1 and 6)?
Further, will you reject John Lohr's request for
expression of support as outlined in his letter to
you of February 12th (please and thank you)?**

I ask you to express these concerns, which many constituents share and that I hope you and council also share, to John Lohr, the Premier, our MLA, and the Leader of the Opposition.

The following are copies of the letters I have sent to our MLA and copied to others.

Feb 19th letter to MLA, copying the Premier, Leader of the Opposition, Finance Minister, and MP, sent in response to introduction of Bills 1 and 6 in the legislature

Dear MLA Melissa Sheehy-Richard,

I do not support Bills 1 and 6 that were introduced yesterday in the legislature, and I urge you to vote against them. Such impactful changes warrant public discussion. These proposed changes were not part of the Progress Conservative's, Tim Houston's or your

election platforms.

I really do not think you have the support of the public for these bills. It appears the content of these bills has largely been kept from the public and the media and yet these bills are now being fast-forwarded behind closed doors in the legislature as we speak, with no opportunity for public input. Further, it is my understanding that the media are not being allowed or engaged except under strictly controlled government settings. These are egregious denials of transparency, accountability and democratic processes by this government, including you as our MLA.

Bill 1, which gives the government the power to dismiss the Auditor General without cause and withhold and redact their report, would enact an alarming abdication of financial accountability and transparency. The bill also reverses the government's own fixed-election-date legislation and earlier election promise. Further, it aims to do away with the non-partisan Communications NS and make changes to the Freedom of Information Act to enable the refusal of applications. All of these represent dangerous precedents for accountability, transparency and democracy itself. Such proposed changes warrant broader public discussion.

Bill 6, which repeals the bans on uranium mining and fracking and fast-tracks mining and other resource extractions, is irresponsible and denies past, present and future public processes. Nova Scotia is too small in land mass and too permeated with ground and surface waterways to safely conduct activities such as uranium mining and fracking. Further, fast-tracked resource extraction is not an appropriate response to tariff threats from the USA. Instead, innovative economies based on safe and sustainable value-

added products and services are warranted, such as developed through ecological forestry, sustainable fisheries, agriculture and mining, tourism, and educational institutions.

By extension, I do not support the tabled deficit budget that finances the fast-tracking of resource extraction. Rather, the budget should support the development of made-in-NS value-added products and services, such as from ecological forestry, sustainable fisheries and agriculture, and tourism. Revenues for this should be generated by further taxing the wealthy, both corporations and individuals.

Further, Premier Houston has said the government has no intention of listening to so-called “special interests,” which he seems to characterize primarily as anyone with environmental concerns. It is unfathomable to me how the pros and cons of any proposed resource development policy or project can be considered and discussed without input from environmental experts and communities. This is a problematic approach, given this government says they intend to fast track the resource extractions and developments “that can be done safely”. How can safety be confidently and responsibly defined and determined without inputs from environmental experts at arms-length from industry and government?

The situation we now find ourselves in is exacerbated by the fact that the current government now claims a broad but shallow (pseudo-)majority that does not reflect the majority of the public. Unfortunately, however, this (pseudo-)majority appears to have emboldened and enabled the Premier and conservative MLAs to ignore democratic process and public input. The bills as proposed represent nothing short of a further attempt to consolidate power and

exclude community input.

I'm curious as to what your thoughts are on these bills and the government's behaviours. To me, they are so egregious that I cannot imagine anyone would support them except for the power-and-wealth elite who want to concentrate it further into their own hands, such as developers and resource extraction industries, who are already extremely powerful "special interest" groups whose opinions should be suspect, given their self-serving conflicts of interest. To the outside observer, the government's actions are more akin to authoritarianism than democracy.

I look forward to your response. I urge you to express my concerns, which are shared by many others who do not feel comfortable writing letters, in the legislature. I also urge you to not support either of these bills.

Respectfully,

Feb 12th letter to MLA in response to Tim Houston's full front page ad in The Chronicle Herald

Dear Melissa Sheehy-Richard,

I am writing to you to request a meeting in your role as my local MLA as well as Ministerial Assistant to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. Ideally, I would like to meet with you in person, but a telephone or Teams conversation may be more feasible given the pending sitting of the House. I would also then like to meet with you in person when you are back in Windsor.

In the interim, I am expressing via this email message my concern about the content of Premier Tim

Houston's paid advertising in The Chronical Herald on January 25. As my MLA, and as Ministerial Assistant to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I hope you will express these concerns during the sitting of the House. I also hope that you will bear my concerns in mind in carrying out your other duties as MLA and Ministerial Assistant.

First, as a citizen who has also had a long career in environmental sciences, both social and natural, I am concerned that this government may consider environmental issues and advocates as "special interests" with "outsized voice in policy creation." We are in a period of both climate and biodiversity crises. These are fundamental components of our life support system. There will be no economy if our ecological life support system and its associate ecosystem services fail. It is well established in science that we are at or beyond planetary limits for these crucial systems. As a society and a species we must make immediate transformative changes to restore these life-supporting systems to sustainable levels. Environmental concerns are not "special interests" or "irrational fears." They are central to the continuance of life on earth.

Second, ecological sustainability is crucial to economic sustainability. Any talk of sustainability must be grounded in ensuring ecological sustainability. And to get there, we need to shift to restoring and enhancing ecological systems, not further degrading and fragmenting them. If the next generation is to "be better off than this generation," any resource extraction and development must be done with ecological restoration and protection and careful siting as a fundamental part of the plan.

Third, bans in NS are not "lazy public policy". Bans on fracking and uranium mining and the moratorium on

Gorges Bank, for example, are grounded in well-established environmental sciences including those related to human health. They are also the result of extensive public processes and considerations of complex, interrelated factors. Such governance practices and policies are not “lazy”, but are rather key tools of best practices in a democracy.

Fourth, the current government was not elected on a platform of ramping up resource extraction. Rather, it was elected on a platform of public health and housing, and on the basis of past promises, such as to protect 20% of NS as parks and protected areas and implement the ecological forestry recommendations of the so-called Lahey report.

I acknowledge that it is important to pursue responsible opportunities for mining, renewable energy, and other value-added resource-based initiatives. It is equally important, however, that these be carefully planned and sited to ensure they do not destroy the best of what’s left for wildlife habitat, especially for species at risk such as American moose and wood turtle, older forests, and other key components of our life-supporting ecological systems.

Finally, I do not support my tax dollars being spent for paid advertising that espouses such a blatantly partisan perspective, especially one that comes across as threatening, bullying and insulting. Such advertisements should be paid for by the PC Party, not by the Government of Nova Scotia.

Especially in your role as Ministerial Assistant to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I urge you to listen carefully to the concerns of those who understand environmental issues. I also urge you to uphold current environmental laws, policies and

practices, and work to strengthen those that are needed for ecologically sustainable development and a liveable future, for all peoples and nature. I have ideas for these that I would be happy to discuss with you.

I also urge you to respect and advance Indigenous rights and leadership, especially the Mi'kmaq, the original stewards of this land, and listen to and stand with them in peace and friendship, as treaty people.

I welcome your response and the opportunity to speak with you further about these issues.

Respectfully,

Karen Beazley

From: Abraham Zebian

<Mayor.Zebian@westhants.ca>

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 at 3:21 PM

To: Karen Beazley

Cc: PublicOnlyCouncilEmail

<allcouncil@westhants.ca>,

melissa.mlaoffice@gmail.com

<melissa.mlaoffice@gmail.com>,

dmamin@novascotia.ca <dmamin@novascotia.ca>

Subject: Re: Letter from John Lohr to Mayors and Wardens

CAUTION: The Sender of this email is not from within Dalhousie.

Thank you for the email Karen.

It will be added to correspondence for Councils information.

Kindest regards.

Mayor Abraham Zebian
West Hants Regional Municipality
76 Morrison Drive, Windsor, NS B0N 2T0
902-790-1566

On Feb 13, 2025, at 2:38 PM, Karen
Beazley wrote:

Caution [External Email]

This email comes from an outside sender. Verify the sender and use caution with any requests, links or attachments.

Dear Mayor Abraham Zebian and West
Hants Regional Municipal Council,

I am writing with regard to John Lohr's letter to Mayors and Wardens, dated February 11, 2025. Together with Premier Houston's paid advertising in The Chronicle Herald, this letter raises concerns and contradictions. Before deciding whether or not to signal support for reductions in trade barriers and for resource development, I urge Mayor and Council to deeply consider the implications for democracy, the environment, municipal autonomy and authority, and our community.

Given the current economic threats posed by USA-imposed trade tariffs, I agree that reducing inter-provincial trade barriers makes sense. However, I caution that an *a priori, carte blanche* expression of support for resource development

would pose a dangerous precedent.

I acknowledge that any society needs to use resources to support life and livelihoods. Nonetheless, it is crucial that resource development be carefully planned and managed to ensure it is ecologically sustainable and socially just. Provincial pressure tactics and strong-armed requests for support and approval prior to such considerations are directly opposed and counter to the stated need in the letter to take such steps “carefully and in consultation with our communities.”

I caution that any prior signalling of council’s “support for greater resource development within our province – by letter or press release” may well be used against you/us in the future. Such a letter may be used by John Lohr or others to counter any future democratically derived conclusions, concerns, or policies arising from careful consideration and consultation within our local communities. Prior and wide-open expressions of approval in effect pre-empt democratic processes, and instead represent an autocratic approach.

In addition to the current political situation, we are facing existential threats to life on earth posed by the climate and biological diversity crises. Scientific studies show that we are at or beyond planetary limits for both. Any resource development must also maintain and restore our life supporting ecological

systems and their ecosystem services. There will be no economy without clean air, water, soil and the diversity of species that comprise the living component of ecological systems. Excessive and poorly sited resource development will further fragment and degrade these systems.

Premier Houston does not have a mandate from the people of Nova Scotia to forge ahead with fast-tracked, intensive and extensive resource extraction and to roll back or disregard carefully considered environmental policies and protections. Premier Houston did not run on these issues, but rather on health care. Further, the Houston government's base of support is thin, receiving only 27% of the votes from registered voters; and he did so by calling an early election in contravention of his own election policy. As evidence that there is not a broad base of support, a vast majority of calls and e-mails to a CBC radio Maritime Noon call-in show earlier this week did not support, and indeed strongly opposed, Premier Houston's scheme to expand resource extraction.

Nova Scotia is a small province with a limited land base. Competing uses of this limited land and water base need to be carefully considered in both ecological and sociological terms and in regard to both long and short term costs and benefits. Decisions made today will impact life for the indefinite future. We need to ensure they result in a liveable

environment for our children, all peoples,
and all of nature.

I urge Mayor and Council to hold on to
your municipal powers, autonomy, and
sovereignty to do what is best for our
community. I urge you to not signal *carte
blanche, a priori* support for resource
development in the Province, either by
letter or press release.

Respectfully,
Karen Beazley

<NS-physicians-warn-about-health-harms-letter-to-Premier-Houston.pdf>

From: Karen Beazley
To: [Abraham Zebian](#)
Cc: [PublicOnlyCouncilEmail](#); melissa.mlao@office@gmail.com; dmamin@novascotia.ca
Subject: Letter from John Lohr to Mayors and Wardens
Date: February 13, 2025 2:38:27 PM

Caution [External Email]

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Dear Mayor Abraham Zebian and West Hants Regional Municipal Council,

I am writing with regard to John Lohr's letter to Mayors and Wardens, dated February 11, 2025. Together with Premier Houston's paid advertising in The Chronicle Herald, this letter raises concerns and contradictions. Before deciding whether or not to signal support for reductions in trade barriers and for resource development, I urge Mayor and Council to deeply consider the implications for democracy, the environment, municipal autonomy and authority, and our community.

Given the current economic threats posed by USA-imposed trade tariffs, I agree that reducing inter-provincial trade barriers makes sense. However, I caution that an *a priori*, *carte blanche* expression of support for resource development would pose a dangerous precedent.

I acknowledge that any society needs to use resources to support life and livelihoods. Nonetheless, it is crucial that resource development be carefully planned and managed to ensure it is ecologically sustainable and socially just. Provincial pressure tactics and strong-armed requests for support and approval prior to such considerations are directly opposed and counter to the stated need in the letter to take such steps "carefully and in consultation with our communities."

I caution that any prior signalling of council's "support for greater resource development within our province – by letter or press release" may well be used against you/us in the future. Such a letter may be used by John Lohr or others to counter any future democratically derived conclusions, concerns, or policies arising from careful consideration and consultation within our local communities. Prior and wide-open expressions of approval in effect pre-empt democratic processes, and instead represent an autocratic approach.

In addition to the current political situation, we are facing existential threats to life on earth posed by the climate and biological diversity crises. Scientific studies show that

we are at or beyond planetary limits for both. Any resource development must also maintain and restore our life supporting ecological systems and their ecosystem services. There will be no economy without clean air, water, soil and the diversity of species that comprise the living component of ecological systems. Excessive and poorly sited resource development will further fragment and degrade these systems.

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Nova Scotia is a small province with a limited land base. Competing uses of this limited land and water base need to be carefully considered in both ecological and sociological terms and in regard to both long and short term costs and benefits. Decisions made today will impact life for the indefinite future. We need to ensure they result in a liveable environment for our children, all peoples, and all of nature.

I urge Mayor and Council to hold on to your municipal powers, autonomy, and sovereignty to do what is best for our community. I urge you to not signal *carte blanche*, *a priori* support for resource development in the Province, either by letter or press release.

Respectfully,
Karen Beazley

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Karen Beazley
To: [Abraham Zebian](#); [PublicOnlyCouncilEmail](#)
Cc: [melissa.mlaoffice@gmail.com](#); [FinanceMinister@novascotia.ca](#); [dmamin@novascotia.ca](#); [Claudia Chender](#); [premier@novascotia.ca](#); [Blois, Kody - M.P.](#)
Subject: Re: Letter from John Lohr to Mayors and Wardens
Date: February 21, 2025 1:41:16 PM

Caution [External Email]

This email comes from an outside sender. Verify the sender and use caution with any requests, links or attachments.

Dear Mayor Abraham Zebian and West Hants Regional Municipal Council,

Thank you for your response to my letter of February 13th to you and all council.

In the interim, Tim Houston's government has introduced bills in the legislature that raise grave concerns for me and many others. They are relevant to the issues I raised in my previous letter to you.

- Bill 6 introduces measures such as lifting well-justified bans and reducing environmental and other protection and assessment provisions so as to facilitate fast-tracked resource extraction.
- Bill 1 exacerbates this by reducing opportunities for public and legislative debate, accountability, and transparency. This is also the bill that aims to give the government the power to dismiss the Auditor General without cause and other measures.

These and other introduced bills should be of concern to you and council because they reduce the powers and participation of municipal governments and citizens in decision making with potentially serious and long-term negative impacts on our communities and democracy.

Below, I provide a copy of the letters I have sent to our MLA which outline my concerns. I urge you and all council to read and consider them carefully. I further urge you to NOT provide a letter of support as requested by John Lohr.

Do you support these Bills (1 and 6)?

Further, will you reject John Lohr's request for expression of support as outlined in his letter to you of February 12th (please and thank you)?

I ask you to express these concerns, which many constituents share and that I hope you and council also share, to John Lohr, the Premier, our MLA, and the Leader of the Opposition.

The following are copies of the letters I have sent to our MLA and copied to others.

Feb 19th letter to MLA, copying the Premier, Leader of the Opposition, Finance Minister, and MP, sent in response to introduction of Bills 1 and 6 in the legislature

Dear MLA Melissa Sheehy-Richard,

I do not support Bills 1 and 6 that were introduced yesterday in the legislature, and I urge you to vote against them. Such impactful changes warrant public discussion. These proposed changes were not part of the Progress Conservative's, Tim Houston's or your election platforms.

I really do not think you have the support of the public for these bills. It appears the content of these bills has largely been kept from the public and the media and yet these bills are now being fast-forwarded behind closed doors in the legislature as we speak, with no opportunity for public input. Further, it is my understanding that the media are not being allowed or engaged except under strictly controlled government settings. These are egregious denials of transparency, accountability and democratic processes by this government, including you as our MLA.

Bill 1, which gives the government the power to dismiss the Auditor General without cause and withhold and redact their report, would enact an alarming abdication of financial accountability and transparency. The bill also reverses the government's own fixed-election-date legislation and earlier election promise. Further, it aims to do away with the non-partisan Communications NS and make changes to the Freedom of Information Act to enable the refusal of applications. All of these represent dangerous precedents for accountability, transparency and democracy itself. Such proposed changes warrant broader public discussion.

Bill 6, which repeals the bans on uranium mining and fracking and fast-tracks mining and other resource extractions, is irresponsible and denies past, present and future public processes. Nova Scotia is too small in land mass and too permeated with ground and surface waterways to safely conduct activities such as uranium mining and fracking. Further, fast-tracked resource extraction is not an appropriate response to tariff threats from the USA. Instead, innovative economies based on safe and sustainable value-added products and services are warranted, such as developed through ecological forestry, sustainable fisheries, agriculture and mining, tourism, and educational institutions.

By extension, I do not support the tabled deficit budget that finances the fast-tracking of resource extraction. Rather, the budget should support the development of made-in-NS value-

added products and services, such as from ecological forestry, sustainable fisheries and agriculture, and tourism. Revenues for this should be generated by further taxing the wealthy, both corporations and individuals.

Further, Premier Houston has said the government has no intention of listening to so-called “special interests,” which he seems to characterize primarily as anyone with environmental concerns. It is unfathomable to me how the pros and cons of any proposed resource development policy or project can be considered and discussed without input from environmental experts and communities. This is a problematic approach, given this government says they intend to fast track the resource extractions and developments “that can be done safely”. How can safety be confidently and responsibly defined and determined without inputs from environmental experts at arms-length from industry and government?

The situation we now find ourselves in is exacerbated by the fact that the current government now claims a broad but shallow (pseudo-)majority that does not reflect the majority of the public. Unfortunately, however, this (pseudo-)majority appears to have emboldened and enabled the Premier and conservative MLAs to ignore democratic process and public input. The bills as proposed represent nothing short of a further attempt to consolidate power and exclude community input.

I’m curious as to what your thoughts are on these bills and the government’s behaviours. To me, they are so egregious that I cannot imagine anyone would support them except for the power-and-wealth elite who want to concentrate it further into their own hands, such as developers and resource extraction industries, who are already extremely powerful “special interest” groups whose opinions should be suspect, given their self-serving conflicts of interest. To the outside observer, the government’s actions are more akin to authoritarianism than democracy.

I look forward to your response. I urge you to express my concerns, which are shared by many others who do not feel comfortable writing letters, in the legislature. I also urge you to not support either of these bills.

Respectfully,

Feb 12th letter to MLA in response to Tim Houston’s full front page ad in The Chronicle Herald

Dear Melissa Sheehy-Richard,

I am writing to you to request a meeting in your role as my local MLA as well as Ministerial Assistant to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. Ideally, I would like to meet with you in person, but a telephone or Teams conversation may be more feasible given the pending sitting of the House. I would also then like to meet with you in person when you are back in Windsor.

In the interim, I am expressing via this email message my concern about the content of Premier Tim Houston's paid advertising in The Chronicle Herald on January 25. As my MLA, and as Ministerial Assistant to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I hope you will express these concerns during the sitting of the House. I also hope that you will bear my concerns in mind in carrying out your other duties as MLA and Ministerial Assistant.

First, as a citizen who has also had a long career in environmental sciences, both social and natural, I am concerned that this government may consider environmental issues and advocates as "special interests" with "outsized voice in policy creation." We are in a period of both climate and biodiversity crises. These are fundamental components of our life support system. There will be no economy if our ecological life support system and its associated ecosystem services fail. It is well established in science that we are at or beyond planetary limits for these crucial systems. As a society and a species we must make immediate transformative changes to restore these life-supporting systems to sustainable levels. Environmental concerns are not "special interests" or "irrational fears." They are central to the continuance of life on earth.

Second, ecological sustainability is crucial to economic sustainability. Any talk of sustainability must be grounded in ensuring ecological sustainability. And to get there, we need to shift to restoring and enhancing ecological systems, not further degrading and fragmenting them. If the next generation is to "be better off than this generation," any resource extraction and development must be done with ecological restoration and protection and careful siting as a fundamental part of the plan.

Third, bans in NS are not "lazy public policy". Bans on fracking and uranium mining and the moratorium on Georges Bank, for example, are grounded in well-established environmental sciences including those related to human health. They are also the result of extensive public processes and considerations of complex, interrelated factors. Such governance practices and policies are not "lazy", but are rather key tools of best practices in a democracy.

Fourth, the current government was not elected on a platform of ramping up resource extraction. Rather, it was elected on a platform of public health and housing, and on the basis of past promises, such as to protect 20% of NS as parks and protected areas and implement

the ecological forestry recommendations of the so-called Lahey report.

I acknowledge that it is important to pursue responsible opportunities for mining, renewable energy, and other value-added resource-based initiatives. It is equally important, however, that these be carefully planned and sited to ensure they do not destroy the best of what's left for wildlife habitat, especially for species at risk such as American moose and wood turtle, older forests, and other key components of our life-supporting ecological systems.

Finally, I do not support my tax dollars being spent for paid advertising that espouses such a blatantly partisan perspective, especially one that comes across as threatening, bullying and insulting. Such advertisements should be paid for by the PC Party, not by the Government of Nova Scotia.

Especially in your role as Ministerial Assistant to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I urge you to listen carefully to the concerns of those who understand environmental issues. I also urge you to uphold current environmental laws, policies and practices, and work to strengthen those that are needed for ecologically sustainable development and a liveable future, for all peoples and nature. I have ideas for these that I would be happy to discuss with you.

I also urge you to respect and advance Indigenous rights and leadership, especially the Mi'kmaq, the original stewards of this land, and listen to and stand with them in peace and friendship, as treaty people.

I welcome your response and the opportunity to speak with you further about these issues.

Respectfully,

Karen Beazley

From: Abraham Zebian <Mayor.Zebian@westhants.ca>

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 at 3:21 PM

To: Karen Beazley

Cc: PublicOnlyCouncilEmail <allcouncil@westhants.ca>, melissa.mlaoffice@gmail.com <melissa.mlaoffice@gmail.com>, dmamin@novascotia.ca <dmamin@novascotia.ca>

Subject: Re: Letter from John Lohr to Mayors and Wardens

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Thank you for the email Karen.

It will be added to correspondence for Councils information.

Kindest regards.

Mayor Abraham Zebian
West Hants Regional Municipality
76 Morrison Drive, Windsor, NS B0N 2T0
902-790-1566

On Feb 13, 2025, at 2:38 PM, Karen Beazley

Caution [External Email]

This email comes from an outside sender. Verify the sender and use caution with any requests, links or attachments.

Dear Mayor Abraham Zebian and West Hants Regional Municipal Council,

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Given the current economic threats posed by USA-imposed trade tariffs, I agree that reducing inter-provincial trade barriers makes sense. However, I caution that an *a priori, carte blanche* expression of support for resource development would pose a dangerous precedent.

I acknowledge that any society needs to use resources to support life and livelihoods. Nonetheless, it is crucial that resource development be carefully planned and managed to ensure it is ecologically sustainable and socially just.

Provincial pressure tactics and strong-armed requests for support and approval prior to such considerations are directly opposed and counter to the stated need in the letter to take such steps “carefully and in consultation with our communities.”

I caution that any prior signalling of council’s “support for greater resource development within our province – by letter or press release” may well be used against you/us in the future. Such a letter may be used by John Lohr or others to counter any future democratically derived conclusions, concerns, or policies arising from careful consideration and consultation within our local communities. Prior and wide-open expressions of approval in effect pre-empt democratic processes, and instead represent an autocratic approach.

In addition to the current political situation, we are facing existential threats to life on earth posed by the climate and biological diversity crises. Scientific studies show that we are at or beyond planetary limits for both. Any resource development must also maintain and restore our life supporting ecological systems and their ecosystem services. There will be no economy without clean air, water, soil and the diversity of species that comprise the living component of ecological systems. Excessive and poorly sited resource development will further fragment and degrade these systems.

Premier Houston does not have a mandate from the people of Nova Scotia to forge ahead with fast-tracked, intensive and extensive resource extraction and to roll back or disregard carefully considered environmental policies and protections. Premier Houston did not run on these issues, but rather on health care. Further, the Houston government’s base of support is thin, receiving only 27% of the votes from registered voters; and he did so by calling an early election in contravention of his own election policy. As evidence that there is not a broad base of support, a vast majority of calls and e-mails to a CBC radio Maritime Noon call-in show earlier this week did not support, and indeed strongly opposed, Premier Houston's scheme to expand resource extraction.

Nova Scotia is a small province with a limited land base. Competing uses of this limited land and water base need to be carefully considered in both ecological and sociological terms and in regard to both long and short term costs and benefits. Decisions made today will impact life for the indefinite future. We need to ensure they result in a liveable environment for our children, all peoples, and all of nature.

I urge Mayor and Council to hold on to your municipal powers, autonomy, and sovereignty to do what is best for our community. I urge you to not signal *carte blanche, a priori* support for resource development in the Province, either by letter or press release.

Respectfully,
Karen Beazley

From: Karen Beazley
To: premier@novascotia.ca
Cc: Kim.Adair@novascotia.ca; Mike.MacPhee@novascotia.ca; Morgan.McWade@novascotia.ca; Darleen.Langille@novascotia.ca; [Blois, Kody - M.P.](#); [Abraham Zebian](#); [PublicOnlyCouncilEmail](#)
Subject: Concerns and questions about Bill 1
Date: February 24, 2025 10:39:07 AM

Caution [External Email]

This email comes from an outside sender. Verify the sender and use caution with any requests, links or attachments.

Hon. Premier, Ministers, Speaker, Opposition, and all MLAs;

I am writing to express my concerns, ask questions and urge you to withdraw or vote against Bill 1. I have grave concerns about the Bill as a whole as well as many of its individual provisions.

Such impactful changes warrant public discussion. The provisions in Bill 1 were not part of your or your party's election platforms. You do not have a mandate from the people of Nova Scotia to make these wide sweeping changes that negatively impact democracy itself.

It must be apparent to you given the push back by citizens, members of the legislature, the leader of the opposition, the media, and the Auditor General herself that you do not have the support of the public for these bills. The content of these bills had largely been kept from the public and the media prior to the sitting of the legislature and now these bills are being fast-forwarded behind closed doors in the legislature as we speak, with little real opportunity for prior or current input and feedback. That the media is not being engaged except under strictly government-controlled settings away from the legislature is highly problematic. Individually and in totality, these are egregious denials of transparency, accountability and democratic processes by this government, especially by you as Premier.

Bill 1, which would give the government the power to dismiss the Auditor General without cause and withhold and redact their report under vague conditions, would enact an alarming abdication of financial accountability and transparency. Such changes do not align with the majority of other provinces in Canada, and would align us most closely with those that have similarly problematic provisions.

The bill also reverses the government's own fixed-election-date legislation and earlier election promise. Further, it aims to do away with the non-partisan Communications NS and make changes to the Freedom of Information Act to enable the refusal of applications on poorly defined grounds with much discretion. All of these represent dangerous precedents for accountability, transparency and democracy itself. They serve only to increase secrecy, control and power. Such proposed changes warrant broader public discussion.

I ask you, why are you unwilling to engage with the Auditor General in discussing the issues

and making amendments that work for both parties?

Why are you reducing the ability of Nova Scotians to understand, question and provide input into democratic processes, especially those involving fundamental changes (such as these in Bill 1) that threaten transparency, accountability and democracy itself?

Why do you want to get rid of Communications NS and make changes to the Freedom of Information Act that give broad provision to dismiss and ignore requests on vague and subjective grounds?

Why have you back-tracked on your own government's fixed-election date legislation?

Why are you attempting to limit the powers of municipalities?

Why are you in such a rush to push through changes to structures and processes that are fundamental to democracy without public discussion and negotiations, such as with the Auditor General? By introducing wide-sweeping changes such as those in this Bill, it is hard for citizens like me (and the Auditor General) to understand the full implications and respond to them under such a tight timeline.

Will you be happy that future governments have such powers, when your time is through?

These changes seem highly irresponsible and akin to nothing less than a blatant power grab. They represent a bait-and-switch approach to elections and governance. They erode faith and trust in government, in you as Premier and all MLAs that support this deeply concerning Bill.

I urge you to remove Bill 1 from consideration in this legislature and work with knowledgeable and credible people to address the concerns that you are trying to address through this flawed and unpalatable bill.

Respectfully,

Karen F. Beazley

I am privileged to live on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq nation. We are all Treaty people.

I acknowledge the histories, contributions, and legacies of the African Nova Scotian people and communities who have been here for over 400 years.

Bcc:

barbadamsmla@gmail.com; mlascottarmstrong@gmail.com; hello@digbyannapolis.ca;
barkhouseMLA@gmail.com; info@trevorboudreau.ca; mladavidbowlby@gmail.com;
Rick.burns.mla@gmail.com; claudiachender@nsmla.ca; briancomermla@gmail.com;
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timouthitmla@gmail.com; chrispalmermla@gmail.com; info@iainrankin.ca;
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contact@damianstoilovmla.com; Tom.Taggartmla@gmail.com;
michellethompsonmla@gmail.com; mla@northsidewestmount.ca;
mla@northsidewestmount.ca; DianneTimminsMLA@gmail.com;
mlajulievanexan@gmail.com; Johnwhitemla@outlook.com; rodwilson@nsmla.ca;
brianwongmla@gmail.com; paulwozney@nsmla.ca; nolan.young@shelburnemla.ca;
Health.Minister@novascotia.ca; edminister@novascotia.ca;
MentalHealth.Minister@novascotia.ca; speaker@novascotia.ca; OSDMIN@novascotia.ca;
lnuaffairsminister@novascotia.ca; women@novascotia.ca; cnsminister@novascotia.ca;
Mindnr@novascotia.ca; SNS-Min@novascotia.ca; Min-CSDS@novascotia.ca;
SLTCmin@novascotia.ca; mindfa@novascotia.ca; min_dag@novascotia.ca;
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OEAMinister@novascotia.ca; JUSTMIN@novascotia.ca; publicworksminister@novascotia.ca;
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February 19, 2025

The Honorable Tim Houston,
Premier of Nova Scotia
7th Floor, One Government Place
1700 Granville Street
Halifax, NS B3J 1X5

premier@novascotia.ca

RE: Repealing the Uranium Exploration and Mining Prohibition Act and amendments to permit hydraulic fracturing of natural gas in Nova Scotia

Dear Premier Houston,

We are writing on behalf of the Nova Scotia committee of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE) to express our deep concerns regarding your plans to remove bans on hydraulic fracturing (fracking) for natural gas and uranium mining exploration and research. As physicians and healthcare providers, we feel it is our duty to bring to your attention the latest medical evidence of the health harms associated with these extractive industries.

CAPE is a non-partisan, physician-led organization with over 36,000 supporters across the country. It plays a unique role at the intersection of health and the environment, bringing a credible, evidence-based perspective delivered by the trusted voices of doctors, other health professionals, and researchers to support community and planetary health and enhance equity. CAPE Nova Scotia represents more than 100 physicians and other healthcare providers across the province.

We understand the economic challenges facing Nova Scotia, including US tariffs and uncertainty around federal funding. We are also acutely aware of the high rates of poverty in our province and how this profoundly affects the communities we serve. However, we strongly believe that pursuing resource extraction activities that contribute to significant health and environmental harms is not the solution to these challenges.

The medical evidence on the health impacts of unconventional oil and gas development, including fracking, is clear and growing. Recent studies have found strong correlations between proximity to fracking sites and:

- Increased rates of preterm births, low birth weight, and congenital defects

- Higher incidences of childhood asthma and leukemia
- Increased hospitalizations for cardiovascular and respiratory diseases
- Higher overall mortality rates and reduced life expectancy

For example, a 2022 study in *Environmental Health Perspectives* found that children living near fracking sites had 2-3 times higher odds of developing acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Another study in *JAMA Pediatrics* showed significantly increased risks of spontaneous preterm birth and low birth weight for pregnancies within 10 km of fracking wells.

Many of the chemicals used in fracking are known carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, or have other toxic effects. Groundwater contamination from fracking chemicals can persist for decades, impacting drinking water supplies and soils, and, in turn, adversely affecting human health.

Uranium mining poses its own set of health hazards, related to radiation exposure from radioactive materials released into air and water, and elevated levels of toxic metals. Historical evidence from uranium mining regions shows dramatically increased rates of lung cancer and other respiratory diseases among miners and nearby residents. While modern safety practices have improved, workers and those living in nearby communities face increased health risks from radon gas, radioactive dust, and potential water contamination.

The long-term environmental impacts of uranium mining is equally concerning. It leaves a toxic legacy of radioactive waste with a half-life of tens of thousands of years. Eighty-five percent of the radioactivity in the uranium ore is left behind as tailings, including many radioactive poisons – such as radium, polonium, and radioactive lead-210 – that are far more toxic than uranium itself. These uranium mining and milling wastes will constitute an everlasting health hazard and will have to be monitored and managed in perpetuity at public expense. The Church Rock uranium tailings spill in New Mexico, which released 94 million gallons of such radioactive waste, remains largely unremediated more than 40 years later. A power outage at a uranium mine in Elliot Lake, Ontario, resulted in the spill of two million litres of contaminated water from a tailings site.

We are also deeply concerned about plans to expand fossil fuel extraction and consumption in the province, at a time when we urgently need to transition away from fossil fuels. Building pipelines and other new fossil fuel infrastructure would only exacerbate the root cause of the severe flooding, monster wildfires, and heatwaves we are experiencing in Nova Scotia. The medical journal *The Lancet* has identified climate change as the greatest global health threat of the 21st century. As healthcare providers, we are already seeing the health effects of climate change in our communities.

The health impacts of fracking, uranium mining—and more broadly, climate change—disproportionately affect Indigenous and African Nova Scotian communities and vulnerable populations, including children, pregnant women, the elderly, disabled people, and



people with pre-existing conditions or biological susceptibilities. Rural and low-income communities also often bear a heavy burden of environmental contamination and health effects. These factors position this as a matter of social, racial, economic and environmental justice. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the UN declaration on the right to a healthy environment, and Canada's *National Strategy Respecting Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice Act* should guide decision-making.

We recognize the need for economic development and healthcare funding. However, the boom-and-bust cycle of fossil fuel resource extraction and uranium mining offers only short-term gains at the expense of long-term public health and environmental costs. Instead, we encourage focusing on sustainable industries like clean renewable energy projects, which create more jobs per dollar invested than fossil fuels, while protecting our air, water, and climate. Such projects will need to be undertaken with community consultation and support, and at a scale that does not harm the local environment.

Nova Scotia has some of the most ambitious climate targets in North America. Expanding fossil fuel infrastructure would be a major step backwards and incompatible with our climate goals. Moreover, repealing laws that protect against the development of fracking and uranium mining would undermine the province's commitment to improve health care for all Nova Scotians.

Therefore, we respectfully call on your government to:

1. Maintain and strengthen existing restrictions on fracking, uranium mining, and other high-risk resource extraction activities
2. Invest in community-supported clean renewable energy and green infrastructure as a path to sustainable economic growth
3. Require comprehensive health impact assessments for any proposed resource extraction projects
4. Prioritize protection of drinking water sources and ecologically sensitive areas
5. Respect UNDRIP; engage in meaningful consultation with Mi'kmaw communities and ensure there is free, prior, and informed consent for any activities impacting Mi'kmaw territory.
6. Engage in meaningful consultation with rural communities, and work collaboratively with them to find shared solutions.
7. Respect the UN Declaration on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment

We recognize the immense challenges you face as Premier during these difficult times. The pressures of US tariffs, healthcare funding gaps, and the need to ensure prosperity for all Nova Scotians are significant burdens to bear. However, we must be careful not to trade one crisis for another. The health of our communities and the natural environment that sustains us are



essential foundations for any lasting economic solution. By maintaining our commitment to environmental protection while pursuing sustainable economic development, Nova Scotia can lead the way on innovative solutions that preserve the health, environmental, and economic legacy we wish to leave for future generations.

Sincerely,

Laurette Geldenhuys, MBBCH FFPATH MMED FRCPC MAEd
on behalf of CAPE Nova Scotia

c.c. Claudia Chender, Leader of the Opposition
Derek Mombourquette, Leader of the Liberal Party