

**Tom Taggart, PC Candidate
Colchester North**

What topic is raised most frequently while campaigning "door to door"?

At the door during this campaign, the issue that is at the top of mind for the people of Colchester North is Health Care. In 2013 the Liberals promised a Doctor for every Nova Scotian. Since taking office they have failed to deliver and have let the problem grow to where almost 70,000 Nova Scotians have no family doctor. This is a record of failure.



Tom Taggart

The Pandemic has also brought the issue of Senior Care to the top of people's minds. I have spoken to hundreds of people who recognize that the Mental Health system in Nova Scotia is in total disarray.

Our leader, Tim Houston, has a plan to rebuild the Health Care system. It will require investment and time, but his plan will address the recruitment and retention of Rural Doctors. It will fund the creation of 2500 additional long-term care beds and train the staff to support seniors in these beds. His plan will establish a new, separate Department of Mental Health with its own Minister and separate budget to address the gaping hole in mental health services in Nova Scotia.

What did Nova Scotians do to contribute to Nova Scotia being Canada's "per capita" leader to fight the Co-Vid pandemic?

I believe the reason that Nova Scotia is the per capita leader in the fight against COVID is very clearly the willingness of the people here to sacrifice for the betterment of the Province. We followed the advice of our medical professionals and the government during this crisis and, because everyone supported the restrictions, we were successful in holding COVID at bay.

Co-Vid restrictions / lockdowns were difficult on all sectors, but primarily the hospitality and tourism sectors. Were the restrictions imposed by government's strict enough? If not, why not?

I believe that the restrictions put in place by Dr. Strang helped us get through the crisis and it seems that we can now see the light on the other side of the tunnel. We will need to support all small businesses that suffered from the necessary restrictions so that we can rebuild our tourism, hospitality and other sectors that struggled during the lockdowns.

What is the most promising asset / resource to achieve economic growth or population growth for Colchester North?

The greatest assets we have in Colchester North are our highly educated people, our abundant natural resource industries, innovative small business operators, our quality of life, and a great geographic location close to two airports, rail access and 100 series highways.

Is "racism" a basic and systemic problem in Colchester North?

Racism is an issue throughout Nova Scotia and Canada and Colchester North is no different. We all have a responsibility to deal with this issue forthrightly. The time for talk is over and action is needed on these issues.

What steps should be taken and how will you assist in making Colchester North among the "least racist" constituency in Nova Scotia?

As a white male I do not profess to have all the answers to solve this issue. I do know it starts with listening to those who have been victims and working collaboratively with these communities to develop an action plan to move our constituency to embrace diversity in all areas. I was raised to believe that everyone is created equal and if we all embraced that we would be off to a good start.

In which sectors in Colchester North should government prioritize its efforts of leadership and funding assistance to achieve a high rate of economic and population growth?

There are many areas and sectors that we need to focus on to rebuild our economy after the pandemic. Four that immediately come to mind are agriculture, fishing, forestry and tourism. These areas have always been our strength and they should be our focus in the short term.

What existing provincial government program or planned policy is least beneficial to businesses and general population in Colchester North?

The least beneficial existing government program to the growth of rural Nova Scotia is the failed restructuring of the Health Care system where decision making is done centrally by Halifax and rural, local voices are silenced. We all know that the Health Care system must be fixed and Doctors recruited to our rural communities. Halifax has failed miserably at supporting our rural Health Care and if we are to grow and prosper we must get local people making local Health Care decisions.

Many people are of the opinion the provincial government is directing too much attention to HRM and larger urban areas. What would you do to change the pendulum to place more emphasis on rural Nova Scotia?

It has always been the Liberal philosophy to centralize decision making in Halifax. We need more local control. I believe that the people who can move rural Nova Scotia forward are those that live here in rural Nova Scotia. Ask yourself, "Is education any better with the elimination of local school Boards? Is Health Care any better with centralized administration? Are rural roads any better, is economic development any better?" Centralization of decision making in choking our rural communities and it has to be rectified.

If you are elected on August 17th will you "toe the party line" on all decisions, or will you consult with and abide by the wishes of taxpayers throughout the constituency?

As your representative in Halifax I will always support what is best for the people of Colchester North. I will be an MLA for the people first, last, and always.

If you are elected on August 17th what actions will you immediately undertake to achieve economic growth and lifestyle enhancements for the constituency of Colchester North?

My first focus will be primary healthcare. Doctor and nurse practitioner recruitment will be my top immediate priority. As the Chair of the Colchester Mental Health Society, Mental Health is a personal commitment not an election buzzword. I will walk the walk on these issues because if we do not improve our health care system we can not fix the other challenging issues we face. Health Care will be my passion as your representative.

Cannabis Products Seized

On June 2, 2021, the Colchester District RCMP Street Crime Enforcement Unit and the General Investigation Section, with support from Millbrook RCMP, Bible Hill RCMP, and Criminal Intelligence Service of Nova Scotia, executed search warrants at three cannabis dispensaries located in Millbrook.

As a result of the unlicensed cannabis storefronts continuing to operate and not voluntarily ceasing operations, police attended the properties and conducted searches of the unlicensed cannabis

storefront under the federal Cannabis Act. A significant quantity of cannabis, cannabis products (including a large quantity of edibles) and cash were seized.

Five people were arrested under the Cannabis Act and Excise Act and are facing charges that include the following: Distribution of Cannabis; Possession for the Purpose of Distributing Cannabis; Unlawfully Selling Cannabis; Unauthorized Possession of Cannabis for the Purpose of Selling it and Sale of Unstamped Cannabis Products. The investigation is ongoing, and additional charges are pending.



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