

Legislative Session Protects Nova Scotians

(Editor's Note: Normally, when the legislature ends a sitting, the Shoreline Journal publishes the Premier's press release in which he summarizes the session. We felt it was more important last month to publish an abundance of photos from local Remembrance Day services. We also felt since the MLAs are spending most of their time in the constituency, rather than at the Legislature, now would be a good time to remind you what transpired in the recent sitting of the house, in the event you wanted to discuss with your MLA.)

Press Release issued by Premier Tim Houston follows:

Modernizing government and protecting Nova Scotians from large power rate increases were the focus of the fall legislative session, which ended today, November 9.

The government introduced legislation to shield Nova Scotians from double-digit power rate increases and from the hardship of a federally imposed carbon tax at a time when inflation is high and affordability remains a concern for many Nova Scotians.

"Nova Scotians expect their elected representatives to take the steps necessary to support them," said Premier Tim Houston. "Our government will continue to stand up for Nova Scotians, including against the unnecessary federal carbon tax."

The government also passed legislation that requires telecommunications companies to provide service during emergencies and to hold those companies accountable to Nova Scotians when they fail to do so.

Taking population growth into account, the government passed multiple bills to address the critical need for housing - removing barriers at the municipal level and making significant changes in how public housing is managed. The new Nova Scotia Provincial Housing Agency was also created to take action to overcome the housing crisis.

Legislation creating two new Crown corporations - In-



Premier Tim Houston

vest Nova Scotia and Build Nova Scotia - will support businesses from startup to commercialization and streamline planning, management and development of strategic infrastructure.

"It's incumbent upon the government to increase accountability, drive economic growth and support businesses to grow and prosper whenever and wherever possible," said Premier Houston.

During the session, the government also modernized the province's labour laws by protecting the jobs of the many families who need time off after experiencing the end of a pregnancy. The legislation provides for an unpaid leave of absence of up to five consecutive working days for a pregnancy that does not result in a live birth, or an unpaid leave of up to 16 weeks if the pregnancy ends after the 19th week.

Legislation was passed to support the environment, economy and energy sector, including strengthening Efficiency Nova Scotia's ability to fight climate change and help Nova Scotians save money on their energy bills. Amendments to multiple bills also pave the way for the production and use of green hydrogen as a clean energy source in the province.

Other legislation passed includes:

- Amendments to the Builders' Lien Act to address payment disputes and make sure members of the construction industry are paid promptly for the work they do;
- Amendments to improve the

governance of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia;

- Amendments to the Nova Scotia Museum Act to include the Sherbrooke Restoration Commission board chair as a member of the Nova Scotia Museum board of governors;
- Amendments to the Municipal Government Act and the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter to create a consistent, provincewide approach for municipalities to charge a marketing levy on the purchase price of hotel rooms and other accommodations;
- Amendments to the Regulations Act to improve the way the government makes official notice of important legislative and regulatory changes available to the public;
- The Municipal Finance Corporation Dissolution Act and amendments to Part I

of the Gaming Control Act to transition the Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation and the Municipal Finance Corporation into the Department of Finance and Treasury Board;

- The Perennia Food and Agriculture Corporation Act to establish the mandate, structure and guidelines for Perennia to operate as a Crown corporation and
- The Financial Measures (Fall 2022) Act to expand a tax credit that encourages companies to invest in equipment that improves productivity and align Nova Scotia's fertility and surrogacy support with new federal definitions.

Additional Resources: For a complete list of bills passed this session, visit: <https://nslegislature.ca/legislative-business/bills-statutes/bills/assembly-64-session-1>

Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is a complex issue that can happen in any relationship, and it continues to be a significant barrier to achieving gender equality in Canada.

Nova Scotia has joined the Government of Canada and other provinces and territories to sign the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence at the 40th annual federal-provincial-territorial meeting of the ministers responsible for the Status of Women, held in New Glasgow.

"Gender-based violence undermines a person's sense of self-worth and their self-esteem. It is deeply rooted in harmful stereotypes and has no place in our country," said Karla MacFarlane, Minister responsible for the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women. "Nova Scotia is proud to be a part of this historic announcement and to reaffirm our commitment to preventing violence and supporting victims and their families."

The national action plan signals Canada's collective commitment to ending gender-based violence and will ensure that the work of provinces, territories and Indigenous partners is aligned as they continue to support survivors and their families, and work closely with service providers, experts, advocates, researchers and across government to address this complex issue.

Quick Facts: More than 11 million people in Canada have experienced intimate partner violence at least once since age 15. This year's federal budget proposed an investment of \$539.3 million over five years, starting in 2022-23, to support provinces and territories in their efforts to implement the national action plan. The national plan aligns with the work of Standing Together, Nova Scotia's commitment to preventing gender-based violence.

Do you feel ignored?

Do you get the feeling you are ignored or treated like second class citizens, because you choose to live in beautiful rural Nova Scotia? **If so, you are not alone.**

Do you miss reading the local news?

Have you looked forward to grabbing a cup of freshly brewed coffee and reading the local news in the paper delivered to your door? **Unfortunately, in Nova Scotia those days are history, as of November 28th.**

We support living in a rural area.

With over 60 years publishing experience, I have focused on rural areas, and even in these times when there is plenty of social media, I believe most newspaper loyalists still want to read the local news with their paper in hand. (M Rees)

We will not let you be ignored?

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New Protected Areas, Funding to Protect More Land

A total of 6,534 additional hectares in Economy River, Portapique River and Wentworth Valley were included as part of a November 10th announcement whereby the Nova Scotia government announced it is investing an additional \$20 million to help protect more of Nova Scotia's land and water and designating another 9,300 hectares of Crown land for the benefit of Nova Scotians and the environment.

In Northern Nova Scotia the expanded wilderness areas and their increases in size are: Economy River, Colchester and Cumberland Counties, 5,495 hectares; Portapique River, Colchester and Cumberland counties, 974 hectare and Wentworth Valley, Cumberland County, 65 hectares

Tory Rushton, Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables said, "In addition to all that we enjoy about nature, protecting more land in Nova Scotia is critically important for our sustainable and prosperous future. It supports biodiversity and helps with carbon capture

which are key as our climate changes. That's why we're committed to reaching our protected area goals and grateful to all our partners for helping us achieve them."

The other areas which will have expanded wilderness areas include: Eastern Shore Islands, Halifax Regional Municipality, 96 hectares; Eigg Mountain-James River, Antigonish County, 71 hectares; Medway Lakes, Annapolis County, 430 hectares and Middle River Framboise, Cape Breton County, 21 hectares.

The ecological sites announced as new nature reserves today are: Barneys River Nature Reserve, Pictou County (567 hectares); Big Meadow Brook Nature Reserve, Hants County (284 hectares); Cherry Hill Beach Nature Reserve, Lunenburg County (27 hectares); Glendyer Nature Reserve, Inverness County (276 hectares); Les Caps Nature Reserve, Inverness County (22 hectares) and Porcupine Brook Nature Reserve, Annapolis County (238 hectares).