

# The Shoreline Journal Tid-Bits

## Invest Nova Scotia CEO announced

Peter MacAskill will serve as President and CEO of Invest Nova Scotia, one of two new Crown corporations established on December 1 to drive economic growth across the province. Mr. MacAskill, currently Invest Nova Scotia's Chief Operating Officer, was the successful candidate in a national competition for the position. He previously held executive roles with Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) since 2012. Mr. MacAskill will begin his new role April 1.

## 2023 Financial Measures Act Introduced

Finance and Treasury Board Minister Allan MacMaster introduced the Financial Measures (2023) Act on March 28. The act provides the authority to implement measures which have financial implications for the Province. The Financial Measures (2023) Act amends several acts. It will transfer authority to charge a tax on parimutuel betting on harness races from the Theatres and Amusements Act to the Revenue Act; eliminate penalty fees on the reinstatement of revoked companies with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies; strengthen independent oversight of Atlantic Central (the organization that represents credit unions in Atlantic Canada); remove the non-resident property tax from legislation; the tax was cancelled last spring before implementation; enable federal harmonization of the excise tax on vaping products and repeal outdated legislation after formalizing the transfer of ownership of Bluenose II financial assets and headquarters to the Lunenburg Marine Museum Society.

## Government Approves Writeoffs for 2022-23

The Province is writing off \$12.8 million in uncollectable debts from past fiscal years up to March 31, 2022. The uncollectable debts are mainly unpaid fines, loans, ambulance fees and pharmacare premiums. A summary of writeoffs by department is listed below:

**Advanced Education, Uncollectable and Defaulted Student Loans**, \$2,336,609.99; **Agriculture NS Farm Loan Board, Financial Support Unpaid Laboratory Services Invoices**, \$3,819,646.69; **Economic Development, Credit Union Small Business Loan Guarantee Program Defaulted Term Loans**, \$1,365,342.58; **Environment and Climate Change, Water Usage Fees**, \$331.55; **Health and Wellness, EMC Ambulance Fees Seniors Pharmacare Premiums**, \$2,809,922.82; **Justice, Uncollectable Fines**, \$2,335,006.50; **Labour, Skills and Immigration, Unpaid Inspection Fees**, \$4,453.00; **Public Works, Unpaid Claims Regarding Motor Vehicle Accidents**, \$77,770.22; **Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services, Unpaid Retail Sales and Fuel Tax Registry of Motor Vehicle Non-Sufficient Funds Land Registry Fees Vital Statistics**, \$30,429.89 **Total \$12,779,513.24**

## Sportfishing Season Opened April 1

The sportfishing season got underway Saturday, April 1, in many lakes and rivers across Nova Scotia. There are 21 barrier-free sites across the province. Sites include different supports, such as accessible parking, flat fishing pads, benches or railings where anglers can cast a line. Anglers at all lakes and rivers must respect bag limits and other regulations. They should also practice catch and release to help maintain healthy fish populations so the sport is available to future generations. Anglers are encouraged to report invasive species to prevent their spread to other bodies of water. Invasive species such as chain pickerel can harm native species, ecosystems and biodiversity. **Quick Facts:** More than 400 lakes are stocked with trout from provincial fish hatcheries each year; people can buy a sportfishing license online or at vendors across the province; general fishing licenses are valid for all freshwater fish species except Atlantic salmon; more than 70,000 people participate in sportfishing each year in Nova Scotia and sportfishing contributes about \$85 million to Nova Scotia's economy.

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## News from our Federal Capital

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thus ensuring an increase in the number of Cumberland-Colchester residents that could obtain regular face-to-face primary medical care.

I can understand the heartache that is felt by thousands of international medical school graduates that could more easily be licensed in Canada but can't be, due to the unwarranted degree of government red tape.

The Conservative Blue Seal program presents an opportunity to create a national standard of licensing that eliminates the patchwork of qualifications that exists in the provinces across Canada today.

### My Private Member's bill

We know that 25 per cent of Canadians have mental health issues, and one out of three Canadians will have mental health issues during their lifetimes. These two facts of life are behind my Private Members Bill C-323, to amend the Excise Tax Act, eliminating GST and HST in two mental health sectors.

Publicly funded mental health services, such as counselling and psychotherapy, are not easily accessible or available when they are most needed. Consequently, Canadians seeking mental health services may have to pay for those services privately. Many patients can ill-afford the fees, let alone the taxes.

We know that by removing the GST and HST from psychotherapists and mental health counselors, will be of great benefit to patients, that in effect, will allow them to have one of every eighth session for free.

My Private Members Bill received second reading April 25.

### Constituency work

A part of my work in Ottawa is dedicated to standing for our Cumberland-Colchester constituency, through talks with national organizations. One such meeting was with the Dairy Farmers of Canada. I was informed that the Canadian dairy sector is facing several headwinds including inflationary pressures on production, market disruption, as well as supply-chain disruptions. The Canadian dairy farming sector has one of the lowest environmental footprints for dairy in the world. Between 1990 and 2020, the car-

bon footprint of milk produced in Canada decreased by 25 per cent on a per-litre basis, and the total carbon footprint for each litre of milk produced in Canada is currently less than half the global average. I am a firm believer in the farm management system as it applies to dairy and will continue to support the quota system.

In early April, I was the keynote speaker at the Natural Disasters Management and Mitigation symposium in Edmonton, where I spoke about my role as Northern Region Covid-19 lead medical officer. Returning to Ottawa, in addition to House sittings, I met with the Canadian Health Coalition; ongoing Standing Committee on Health meetings; planning and priority sessions.

During the Easter break, I hosted my Parliamentary colleague Jake Stewart (Miramichi-Grand Lake). We toured the Fraser Gallery in Tatamagouche, met in Truro with Chief Lorraine Augustine, president of the Native Council of Nova Scotia, and in Brookfield with Kelly Countway of Women Who Hunt.

I had a most informative tour of the Dalhousie University School of Agriculture in Bible Hill. I gained valuable insights at the Haley Institute, and during a farm walkabout. I also visited the Cobequid Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre.

I spent a day in Amherst, where I met with Cumberland Mayor Murray Scott. We discussed issues such as tidal power, the urgent need to address Isthmus of Chignecto rising waters, Joggins area development, and future regional policing possibilities. I was pleased to spend part of the morning shooting a video with Eliza Benedict, director of Shop Cumberland. I also met with Dawn Ferris of the Cumberland County Transition House, Dan Forbes of the Parrsboro Lions Club, and members of the Chignecto Muzzle Loaders.

Back in Ottawa, I met with the executive director of the Canadian Association of Long-Term Care, as well as the Canadian Cancer Society.

I look forward to May, as warmer weather wraps itself around Cumberland-Colchester.

**Dr Stephen Ellis is MP for Cumberland Colchester. He can be reached at: 902-895-2863, or E-mail: stephen.ellis@parl.gc.ca**

## News from our Provincial Council

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getting another 25 doctors for Nova Scotians!

The Patient Access to Care Act means more healthcare providers coming to Nova Scotia, working to their full scope and spending more time with patients. It allows us to quickly adapt to changing needs of Nova Scotians.

Safety is our priority in any changes we make. We will ensure the act protects Nova Scotians while moving the system forward, faster. We would never lower the high standard of care in this

province.

But we cannot continue to do things the way we used to and expect different results. This law makes changes that should have happened a long time ago.

We said we would fix healthcare. That is exactly what we are doing, one solution at a time.

Tim Houston, Premier of Nova Scotia

**Hon Tim Houston is premier of Nova Scotia and can be reached at: PREMIER@novascotia.ca**

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commit to staying in the system for another two years.

Frontline nurses working for publicly funded employers will soon get a bonus of up to \$10,000. They will be eligible for another \$10,000 retention incentive next year if they stay in the system and sign a two-year return of service agreement by the end of March 2024.

The Province will also pay a \$10,000 incentive to nurses who have left the publicly funded system if they agree to come back and sign a two-year return of service agreement. To qualify for this incentive, they will need to agree to take a publicly funded position by March 31, 2023.

Other healthcare workers, including paramedics, telehealth staff, respiratory therapists, continuing care staff, ward clerks, housekeeping and food service staff, among others, will receive a retention bonus of up to \$5,000 in the coming weeks. Eligible employees work for publicly funded health authorities, Emergency Medical Care Inc. (EMCI), Hearing and Speech Nova Scotia, the continuing care sector and disability support programs.

Older Nova Scotians will have more options to help them stay healthy, active and socially connected in their communities with

an investment by the Province. STEPs on Arthur, STEPs for Seniors, Truro will receive \$25,000 for community programming focusing on physical health, social connections / isolation reduction, community support, digital skills.

Truro will soon have access to more affordable housing thanks to an investment of \$3 million to create 56 housing units. To ensure they are affordable they will be offered at up to 80 percent of the local market rate.

I had the honor of making a significant provincial announcement that was held at the Bible Hill Fire Hall for Volunteer fire departments, ground search and rescue organizations, and First Nations fire departments will get help to address the impacts of rising operational costs. The Province is investing almost \$3.5 million to provide one-time grants to more than 340 organizations. Each group will receive \$10,000.

Of course, everyone has heard, The Colchester Legion Stadium will receive \$1 million to fund repairs to structural damage sustained from Hurricane Fiona, allowing the facility to reopen.

**MLA Dave Ritcey is MLA for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River and can be reached at: 902-897-0884 or mlaritcey@bellaliant.com**

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