

**Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin  
MLA Cumberland North**



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Députée Cumberland North**

**Nova Scotia Legislature**

January 21, 2022

Hon. Jill Balser  
Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration  
1505 Barrington Street  
Halifax, NS  
B3J 3K5

Dear Minister Balser:

Greetings from Cumberland County. I hope you had a safe and enjoyable Holiday Season.

Thank you for your service to the people of Nova Scotia, especially your leadership for the Department Labour, Skills, and Immigration.

As Member of the Legislative Assembly for Cumberland North, I am always looking for ways to improve the lives of the people I represent. I am requesting a meeting with you to discuss the needs and priorities identified below.

My first request is that department work be done with an emphasis on Atlantic regional cooperation to advance our Atlantic Region. I believe a more strategic approach and more regional planning will benefit all and will make us more competitive as a strong region in Canada.

I am looking for your assistance to advance priorities related to your department including:

- Persons immigrating to Cumberland County and anywhere in Nova Scotia deserve access to timely health care services. Several people that have moved to Cumberland County over the past year have contacted me and said they would never have moved here if they had known they would not have a family physician. Recruitment of family physicians must be a priority in conjunction with the mandate of attracting more immigrants to Nova Scotia.
- Attracting immigrants to rural Nova Scotia is an important goal and we welcome new people to Cumberland County. Improvements to access to internet and cell phone coverage must be made a priority. There have been many persons consider moving to the Gulf Shore area on Cumberland and chose not to as they would not be able to work from home due to the lack of internet access. I am requesting that improvements to internet and cell phone coverage be made a priority in conjunction with attracting immigrants.
- Your mandate includes implementing an initial marketing program to attract immigrants. Please include Cumberland County in the marketing program. Historically Cumberland has been left out of provincial marketing and advertising campaigns.

- Establishing regional immigration offices will be beneficial. My constituency office receives regular inquiries and having a provincial office here in Amherst would benefit persons greatly. We have a very diverse population and an active multicultural association who would provide community supports. Please consider Amherst as a location for a Regional Immigration Office.
- The labour opportunities in Cumberland are vast. Unfortunately, these opportunities have not always been communicated to students and many students seek education and work outside of our region. Our RENS (Cumberland Business Connector) have identified a need to have our business community involved in communicating local labour needs in an organized manner in local schools. Please work with our RENS to fulfill this goal of your mandate.
- One of the most common concerns I receive from local businesses of all sizes, retail, manufacturing, mining, agriculture, and health care is a lack of workers. We need to attract more working age persons to Cumberland.

Cumberland County offers incredible opportunity for existing and new immigrants. We are eager to work with you and your department.

Your department will play an integral part in advancing Nova Scotia and our Maritime Region to become competitive internationally and achieve economic independence in our own country by becoming less reliant on federal transfers. Cooperation amongst our educational institutions will strengthen our ability to adapt post pandemic.

Thank you for your leadership as Minister and I look forward to working with you in these important areas.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin

Cc: Dr. Stephen Ellis, MP Cumberland Colchester; Mayor Murray Scott, Cumberland County; Mayor David Kogon, Town of Amherst