

Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin
MLA Cumberland North



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Députée Cumberland North

Nova Scotia Legislature

January 30, 2025

The Honourable Tim Halman, M.L.A.
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Department of Environment and Climate Change
5th Floor, Founders Square
1701 Hollis Street
P.O. Box 442
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 2P8

Dear Minister Halman,

Thank you for agreeing to serve the people of Nova Scotia as Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

Governing is about people. On November 26th, 2024, Nova Scotians entrusted us with a mandate to shape a brighter future. We share a belief in the strength of our communities, the ingenuity of our industries, and the rich heritage that defines Cumberland County. Together, we will harness this potential to foster economic growth, improve healthcare, and elevate the quality of life for all residents.

Cumberland County stands on the precipice of tremendous opportunity. By investing in our people, supporting innovation, and ensuring sustainable development, we can unlock prosperity and lead Nova Scotia into a new era of progress. Our collective success hinges on collaboration, bold action, and a steadfast commitment to addressing the unique needs of our communities. As Minister of Environment and Climate Change, your leadership will be pivotal in addressing the critical environmental challenges facing Nova Scotia. Your department's work will be instrumental in protecting our natural resources, combating climate change, and fostering sustainable development across the province.

Specifically, I ask that you prioritize:

1. Advancing the province's renewable energy targets, including achieving 80% of electricity needs from renewable sources by 2030, while ensuring accessibility and affordability for all residents.

2. Prioritizing the protection of Cumberland County's coastline by advancing the **Chignecto Isthmus climate mitigation plan as a critical project for both economic security and climate resilience. This vital infrastructure connects Nova Scotia to the rest of Canada, and its protection is essential to safeguard against rising sea levels and storm surges that threaten the isthmus.**

3. Expanding the network of electric vehicle charging stations in rural communities like Cumberland County to promote sustainable transportation options.

4. Supporting programs to enhance energy efficiency and sustainability for households and businesses, particularly in rural and economically vulnerable areas.

5. Collaborating with municipalities and community organizations to protect natural resources, including expanding protected areas and supporting sustainable land-use practices.

6. Stop the burying of plastics in the province of Nova Scotia as in the [Stop Burying Plastic Act](#) which includes eliminating the practice of burying plastic in the ground in the Province and the Government shall complete or commission a feasibility study on using plastic waste to create energy. https://nslegislature.ca/legc/bills/64th_1st/1st_read/b250.htm

7. Increase the refund of recyclables to match New Brunswick. This is known to increase the percentage of recyclables. Residents get 5 cents for refundables in Amherst and 10 cents for the same products only 10 minutes on the other side of the border. Please follow suit of NB and reward responsible persons who choose to recycle products.

8. The residents of rural Nova Scotia with private wells should have **access to safe drinking water and have free well water testing** as is done in several other Canadian provinces. Consider the contents of Bill 438. The Free Well-water Testing Act would mandate free annual testing of well water for residents of Nova Scotia, covering a comprehensive list of potential contaminants, to ensure safe drinking and bathing water.

https://nslegislature.ca/legc/bills/64th_1st/1st_read/b438.htm

9. A large number of residents in Nova Scotia do not support the aerial spraying of glyphosate. Cumberland County has the majority of spraying of this product in the province of Nova Scotia.. There are known links of this chemical to certain cancers. Before any further approvals are given for aerial spraying of this product in Cumberland County, a public meeting must be held in Cumberland to justify the approvals along with a meeting with Cancer Care NS to understand the incidence of cancers in Cumberland County that could be connected with the spraying.

I would like to request a meeting with you at your earliest convenience to discuss these important priorities and how we can work together to address the unique challenges and opportunities in Cumberland County. Collaboration is key to ensuring that we deliver meaningful results for our communities, and I look forward to engaging with you to advance these goals.

I look forward to working with you to build a stronger, more vibrant Cumberland County. Together, we will seize the opportunities before us and create lasting positive change for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin
MLA for Cumberland North