



**Energy**  
**Office of the Minister**

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April 14, 2014

Mr. Brian Gifford  
[brian.gifford@eastlink.ca](mailto:brian.gifford@eastlink.ca)

Dear Mr. Gifford:

Thank you for your interest in the newly developed program for Efficiency Nova Scotia.

I understand from your comments and letter to me that you want to ensure that renters can also benefit from the program and that some kind of universal service program will be considered by government.

I wish to assure you that the merits and possibilities of a universal service program or other ways to assist low income power ratepayers is part of our electricity review. We are working to identify various options for public discussion as well as examine how many people would be impacted by various options. There will also be a chance to submit additional ideas for comment.

I agree with you that it's important that we have efficiency programs designed for low income renters. We have assurances that the multi-unit residential program which targets low income neighbourhoods will continue. It has been suggested that a minimum percentage of funds should be included in the legislation being currently considered. The bill is structured to allow the utility and review board the flexibility to do exactly this, but does not prescribe any percentages for any area as from year to year there would be issues with uptake, capacity, and so forth. Nonetheless, every year all ratepayers will benefit from the current efficiency tax not being on their bill and the elimination of HST costs being passed on to ratepayers.

As this bill is only related to the electricity programs funded by way of fuel, the provincial efficiency funding and the low income funding being paid by Nova Scotia Power shareholders is outside of the scope of this bill.

Nonetheless, I am eager for the department to work with your coalition and Efficiency Nova Scotia to address the very real issues of low income families when it comes to energy affordability, including the unique challenges associated with ensuring funding aimed at supporting renters actually benefits them.

Sincerely,

Andrew Younger  
Minister

c: Donna Franey