

March 24, 2021

Honourable Iain Rankin
Office of the Premier
7th Floor, One Government Place
1700 Granville Street
Halifax, NS B3J 1X5

Dear Premier Rankin:

I am writing today on behalf of Antigonish County Municipal Council and the numerous private landowners in Antigonish County who have reached out in the past week to express our deep disappointment to the way Bill 4, the Biodiversity Act, was introduced in the Nova Scotia Legislature.

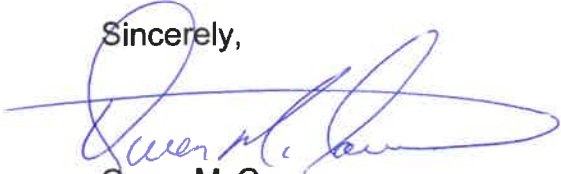
As originally introduced the Biodiversity Act was largely greeted in Antigonish County as a surprising attack on private land ownership, specifically the provisions relating to emergency orders and fines, and its application to all lands, public and private across the province.

Representing 70% of the land in Nova Scotia, private landowners are a crucial stakeholder in securing an environmentally sustainable and secure future. As introduced the Biodiversity Act and the government's communication surrounding it did not reflect the decades of proactive sustainable practices and environmental stewardship of our province's forests, farms and other lands. Further, the government's actions did not reflect its language around working collaboratively with those most directly affected by the legislation.

We are pleased to learn of your decision to eliminate these troubling aspects of the proposed legislation. As your government explores other ways to protect biodiversity and

encourage sound environmental stewardship you will find allies in Antigonish County. We have a common interest in the protection and sustainable use of our natural environment. To that end we strongly encourage you to tackle these significant and complex challenges in a highly collaborative way, involving those directly affected early and consistently.

Sincerely,



Owen McCarron

Warden, Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Cc: Honourable Chuck Porter, Minister of Lands and Forestry
Honourable Randy Delorey, MLA for Antigonish
Honourable Lloyd Hines, MLA for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie
Deputy Mayor Emily Lutz, President, NSFM
Municipal Council
