

Premier Houston,

I am writing in regard to Bill 127, the 'Protecting Nova Scotians Act'. The changes to the Crown Lands Act included in this bill are obviously not intended to "protect" the citizens of Nova Scotia. The changes are intended to prevent the people who care about Nova Scotia's forests, ecology and wildlife, from having the *only remaining means* to attempt to protect them from being ransacked, removed.

After years of trying to work cooperatively to see the terms of the Lahey Report be implemented, and after years of trying to work cooperatively with industry and DNR to protect certain forests in this province, we have come to a place where it's all just about industry having its own way *all* of the time with *every* forest stand they fancy to ransack. Not satisfied with the original plan for setting up High Production Forestry "tree farms" in designated areas, industry is now demanding to ransack additional areas of forest for HPF, *within* some of the most ecologically sensitive and important forests in this province.

That the current government feels the need to enact a new Bill, to try to *control* its citizens and threaten them with arrest and criminal charges, huge fines and even imprisonment, for trying to protect the last vestiges of ecologically significant forest, says something not very nice about this government and industry's ill will, lack of respect, and unwillingness to work cooperatively with the public. Further, this reflects very badly on industry and the government's true *lack of interest and regard* for the ecology of our publicly owned lands, and the wildlife which these lands shelter.

There is a rapidly growing awareness across this province, that the forests are *not* being managed to protect their ecology and protect the most critically important areas for wildlife and posterity. Make no mistake. We have been carefully watching what is going on, and the people of this province are becoming extremely dissatisfied. That dissatisfaction is being expressed through the media, social media, meetings, organizations, and yes, even through public protest and logging road encampments. It's time for government and industry to "read the room" and realize that enacting laws to try to stifle discussion, muzzle the public, prevent people from gathering to protect the forests, and to threaten to arrest, lay criminal charges, impose unreasonable fines, and to even imprison citizens of this province, is not going to look good on you.

If you wish to make *true progress* in navigating a path forward -- a progressive path that would work for all -- then it's time to actually LISTEN to the people of this province and stop trying to make rules to shut us up. The more you try to shut people up, the louder and harder they will fight back -- as is being discovered by Donald Trump who has been trying to shut up the citizens of our neighboring country to the south. You can try, but it is inevitable that you will fail -- as will be reflected at the ballot box in the next election. Please remember that your government's first

election capitalized and won support from those who care about the environment by standing against the foolhardy development of Owl's Head. Do not let your opposition to the citizens of this province, who are standing up for forests such as the Ingram River area, Goldsmith Lake, and others, be the cause that will take you down in the next election.

** This letter has been widely circulated on social media today. Any reply which you make will also be circulated on social media, so state only that which you are willing to see published on social media platforms such as Facebook .

Sincerely

Michelle Hodgson