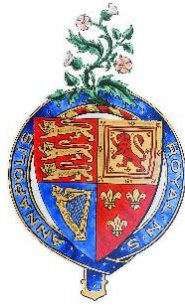


## *Town of Annapolis Royal*



March 5, 2026

The Honourable Tim Houston  
Premier of Nova Scotia  
Via email: [premier@novascotia.ca](mailto:premier@novascotia.ca)

Dear Premier Houston,

First of all, I would like to congratulate the provincial government for its continued focus on healthcare, the improvements it is making to the Department of Justice, the development of standards for police and fire services, and a records management for police, among others. We also appreciate the very real need for balanced budgets while at the same time making needed investments in housing and renewable energy.

As you know, the Town of Annapolis Royal is known internationally as a heritage town with the greatest concentration of heritage buildings per capita in Canada. It has won numerous arts, heritage and culture awards over the years including Most Livable Small Town in the World, Cultural Capital of Canada, and the prestigious Prince of Wales Prize for heritage conservation. Most of the Town is within the National Heritage District. It is no wonder therefore that one of the Town's biggest attractions are also its economic drivers, arts, heritage and culture. They are the reason that tourists from all over the world flock to the Town every year and why our population has been steadily growing, reversing the population decline of the previous century.

The value of arts and culture to well-being in the UK is substantial, with research (2024) indicating that engaging with culture and heritage can improve the health and wellbeing of UK adults to the tune of £8bn every year. This research, part of the DCMS's Cultural and Heritage Capital Programme, has pioneered new methodology to monetize the health and wellbeing benefits of cultural and heritage engagement. The findings suggest that the health and wellbeing benefits associated with an individual adult engaging with culture and heritage every few months or more are worth approximately £1,000 per year. At the population level, the societal benefits, which include increased productivity due to better health, are worth just over £8bn per year. This research underscores the importance of preserving history and celebrating creativity, as investing in culture and heritage unlocks better physical and mental health, reduces healthcare costs, and increases the country's productivity.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce's 2025 report on arts and culture highlights the sector's significant contribution to the Canadian economy. The report reveals that the arts and culture sector contributed \$65 billion in direct GDP to the Canadian economy in 2024, growing faster

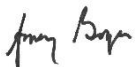
than other key sectors like oil and gas, manufacturing, or agriculture. The sector supports 13 jobs for every million in output, more than oil and gas, manufacturing, or agriculture. The report also notes that the sector has outpaced growth in key industries including oil and gas, wholesale trade, retail trade, construction, and manufacturing. The economic impact is highest in Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs and over \$100 billion in GDP. The report emphasizes the importance of continued investment in the creative economy to keep Canada competitive and connected.

This year, Ireland is creating a scheme that will give artists a weekly income in the hope of reducing their need for alternative work and boosting their creativity. The Basic Income for the Arts (BIA) initiative will provide €325 (£283) a week to 2,000 eligible artists based in the Republic of Ireland in three-year cycles. The culture minister, Patrick O'Donovan, said at the launch in Dublin on Tuesday that it was the first scheme of its kind in the world. *"This is a gigantic step forward that other countries are not doing,"* he said. The scheme was "a start" and hopefully would be expanded, O'Donovan said. *"For the first time in the history of the state we now have, on a permanent basis, a basic income structure that will really revolutionise and, in many ways, set Ireland apart from other countries with regard to how we value culture and creativity."*

Our local arts, culture and heritage organizations are devastated by the news that the Province is planning significant cuts to their core funding. Worse still, it would appear that these major cuts have been planned without any advance notice to the communities served.

The arts, culture and heritage community has suggested a simple alternative to the proposed cuts in funding, and that is to reinstitute the one percent reduction in HST. This would allow for the reinstatement of the \$130 million in cuts to grants while still having \$130.8 million to apply to the deficit. The cut produced an estimated revenue loss for the provincial government of approximately \$260.8 million in the 2025-26 fiscal year. The loss in revenue is expected to grow to \$265.5 million in 2026-27 and \$272.4 million in 2027-28. The Town of Annapolis Royal supports this alternative and urges the Province to seriously consider this option.

Sincerely,



Amery Boyer, Mayor  
on behalf of Town Council

- c. Minister Dave Ritcey, Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage,  
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