

June 17, 2020

Honourable Chuck Porter
Office of the Minister
Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing
8 South, Maritime Centre
1505 Barrington St.
Halifax, NS B3J 2M5

Dear Minister Porter:

Re. PVSC Legislation and the Fall sitting of the House of Assembly

I hope this finds you well in this unprecedented time for Nova Scotia.

As the province takes its initial steps in reopening, I understand that planning is underway for the Fall sitting of the House of Assembly. Not only will that be symbolically important as we strive for a “new normal”, the session’s legislative agenda will be critical, too, for the path ahead for Nova Scotia.

On behalf of the Board and staff of Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC), I wanted to thank you for your department’s support of the creation of PVSC’s for-profit subsidiary. And we would respectfully request that you table the related legislative amendment to the PVSC Act in the upcoming House session.

As you will recall, PVSC has become a global leader in mass appraisal, particularly through Artificial Intelligence innovations, developed right here in partnership with Dalhousie University. Over the past couple of years, organizations around the world have noticed – and are keen to have our services and expertise work for them, too.

Although it may seem counter-intuitive, despite the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic and the slowing of the global economy, PVSC has received even more interest in its products and services since the Spring. Indeed, the business model would appear even more appealing as jurisdictions look for new ways to increase savings, efficiency and accuracy.

In addition, the for-profit subsidiary should, in time, provide significant benefits to Nova Scotia. Not only will it help build the province’s innovation economy and align with the inclusive economic growth strategy, the subsidiary’s new revenues will also help reduce the annual operating costs of the 49 municipalities which fund the organization’s assessment work here in Nova Scotia.

At the same time, we know competitors are out there, trying to leapfrog over us. Time is of the essence and having the legislative amendment passed would be enormously helpful to push our innovative vision forward.

The subsidiary has the support of the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM), and earlier this year, we were greatly encouraged by the support we received in a meeting with the Department of Business and Nova Scotia Business Inc.

Thank you again for your interest, enthusiasm and support for PVSC's culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

And thank you as well for you and your department's role in helping Nova Scotians get through this challenging time in our history.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Greg Keefe', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Greg Keefe
Chair, PVSC Board of Directors

cc: Mayor Pam Mood, President, NSFM
Board of Directors
Kathy Gillis, CEO, PVSC