



**The Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy
OFFICIAL SUBMISSION**

Contact Information

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Area of Interest, Background, Opportunities, Issues, Suggestions for Commission:

I am the former Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Environmental Network from 2005-2010. For five years, I also coordinated the Provincial Working Group on Education for Sustainable Development. I helped to establish the East Coast Environmental Law Association and sat on the national board of Ecojustice Canada for six years. I have an MBA and Law degree from Dalhousie University and a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Victoria. I interned in Japan and in Norway for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade as a Commercial Officer. I am currently a member of the Halifax Peace Coalition and the Nova Scotia Voice of Women. The views expressed in this submission are my own.

Submission:

I would like the Commission to know that I am opposed to the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy (NSPS) and the federal government's plan to spend \$25 billion to build armed combat vessels at the Irving Shipyard in Halifax. Dr. Ugurhan Berkok, a political science and economics professor at the Royal Military College in Ontario, has stated that only \$5 billion of the total \$25-billion contract will be spent in Nova Scotia. The rest of the money will be spent in Ontario, Quebec and the United States, where contractors will be hired to build the ships' combat systems, weapons, electronics, and propulsion units. These are warships that Canada does not need and that are not a national priority. The priorities of Canadians are health care, education, the environment and job creation.

I am also opposed to the Nova Scotia government's support for the NSPS. I think it was wrong for the provincial government to spend \$620,000 for the *Ships Start Here* ad campaign in 2011. I also think it was wrong that the provincial government spent \$135,000 to commission a report by Duke University on the supply chain implications of the Arctic Offshore Patrol Vessels. Irving Shipbuilding Ltd. should have covered the costs of the ads and the reports.

I am especially troubled that the Dexter government gave a \$304 million loan, of which \$260 million is forgivable, to Irving Shipbuilding to upgrade its shipyard. This is the largest Government of Nova Scotia loan to a private

company in our province's history. Moreover, the (war) shipbuilding contract will produce negligible job numbers. This year, the President of the CAW/ Marine Workers Federation has claimed that only 2,500 jobs will be created for a federal expenditure of \$25 billion. Last year, the Dexter government claimed in the House of Assembly that only 4,000 jobs will be created. By contrast, the Pembina Institute in its 2012 report "More Bang for Our Buck: How Canada Can Create More Energy Jobs and Less Pollution," showed that 18,000 green jobs could be created with a government expenditure of \$1.4 billion. More jobs could be created weatherizing homes and buildings, expanding mass transit, and installing renewable energy technologies than in the military. So, the provincial government should not be supporting Irving Shipbuilding with any more provincial tax dollars as it will not provide the maximum number of jobs and benefit to society.

As well, the Dexter government should not be giving tax dollars to the Aerospace Industries Association of Nova Scotia (AIDANS) as it has been through the Department of Economic Development. In November 2012, the provincial government gave \$39,000 to AIDANS for human resource training related to the (war)shipbuilding program. AIDANS is an association for the weapons manufacturers, mostly foreign companies like Lockheed Martin and Ultra Electronics. The Dexter government has been financially supporting the Association and should stop. The Nova Scotia Business Inc. should not use tax dollars to expand the Aerospace & Defence sector in Nova Scotia that is attracting arms dealers to the province. A militarized economy is a failed economy, as is evidenced by the dismal U.S. economy.

Building warships is not the new economy. It is the old, cold war economy. Shipbuilding is also the quintessential boom-and-bust economy – this is obvious by looking at the history of the industry in the province. The highest level of shipbuilding was in the mid-19th century for the manufacturing of merchant ships. The new economy is the green, creative, cooperative and just economy that helps us address the greatest human security challenges – poverty and climate change. Last year, the United Nations' hosted the largest conference in its history - the Earth Summit (Rio +20) - that focused on the great potential of the green economy.

Instead of the forgivable loan to Irving, the Dexter government should strengthen our economy through investments in renewable energy technology, education, and health care. The provincial government could put more people to work in an affordable housing strategy and an early learning & child care system, which are two programs that would help stimulate the economy and provide positive social benefits. The Dexter government should be highlighting the economic progress in this province of fair trade, buy local campaigns, farmers markets, sustainable seafood, credit unions, universities and colleges, and cooperatives.

There are many reports that have been done in the past that should help frame Nova Scotia's new economy. For example, the Genuine Progress Index was completed in 2008 and should be implemented by the Dexter government. The GPI offered a broader understanding of our economy and our well-being and provided a more comprehensive set of indicators to measure our social, environmental and financial performance. The Dexter government should also revisit the *Creative Economy* report of 2009 and sustain the unique Nova Scotia College of Art & Design (NSCAD). The Dexter government should base its economic policies on the "5 Capitals" of the *Sustainable Prosperity Framework* of 2007. Nova Scotia is a leader on solid waste management and recycling and the government could do much more to expand the growth and trade potential of that sector. The provincial government should follow through on its commitment to provide high speed internet across the province and better transportation to rural communities. The Dexter government should also heed the important economic recommendations from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Nova Scotia's Alternative Budget.

Finally, when I was a commercial officer in Norway, a businessman said to me “Our country knows that we are as strong as our weakest link.” There are hardly any weak links in Norway, because the country has free education, free health care, an amazing early learning & childcare program, a guaranteed annual income, and no domestic poverty. Not surprisingly, the Scandinavian countries, Sweden, Finland and Denmark, rank higher than Canada in innovation, productivity and competitiveness according to the World Economic Forum. The Scandinavian countries also rank higher than Canada on the United Nation’s Human Development Index for being the best countries to live in the world. We can grow our economy by investing in our people and protecting the natural environment.

A new economy for Nova Scotia is one that helps our province achieve sustainable development as envisioned in the seminal report, *Our Common Future*. It is an economy that is best for our children.

Send your submission to:

Office of the Secretariat, Nova Scotia Commission on Building our New Economy

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Or email completed form to: maustin@oneNS.ca

For more info visit our website: <http://oneNS.ca>