



Office of the Premier  
1700 Granville Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
One Government Place  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1X5

Feb. 2, 2022

**Re: Consumer spending habits impacting small business**

Dear Premier Tim Houston,

We are writing to you today to voice concern over comments that were attributed to you in a recent media post regarding COVID- 19 supports for small business that appeared in AllNovaScotia.com. This accredited, online news source reported your position on small business support, indicating you suggested changes in consumer purchasing habits due to the Omnicron variant were beyond the purview of government.

As an organization that represents more than 450 small businesses in Truro and Colchester, we would like to counter your position and bring clarity based on what our members are conveying to us. Since the onset of the pandemic nearly two years ago, small business has shouldered the effort to control the spread through sweeping restrictions and closures. Businesses have struggled to pay bills, sell inventories, retain staff and plan for survival in this ever-changing climate.

Consumers have shifted their purchasing habits as a result of government measures to control the pandemic. Online sales, many to international corporations, have ballooned as witnessed by the increased frequency of courier trucks navigating our neighborhoods. Government messaging to control gatherings has further limited in-person shopping predominantly to essential items from a few vendors.

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Government has a strong role in shaping and guiding business through this pandemic with effective and clear messaging as well as a consistent application and enforcement of the rules.

Small businesses are the fabric of the small communities in Nova Scotia. They provide employment, support the tax base and fund the recreational and arts programs that communities identify with. We ask your government to strengthen its messaging to provide better clarity to citizens and consumers and further work with the chamber network to deliver control measures that are justified, encompassing and focused.

Very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Mossman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matthew Mossman

President

Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce

CC: David Ritcey, MLA Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River  
Tom Taggart, MLA Colchester North  
Larry Harrison, MLA South Colchester