105B Walker Street, Truro, NS, B2N 4B1

The Honourable Michelle Thompson

Minister of Health and Wellness

Barrington Tower
1894 Barrington Street
P.O. Box 488
Halifax, NS
B3J 2R8

**RE: Support from the private sector to address health needs in the community**

Dear Minister Michelle Thompson,

I would like to take a moment to thank you on behalf of the Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce for taking time from your very full schedule to meet with leaders of the Truro and Colchester community today.

Our Chamber has been the voice of business in the region for more than 132 years on issues of political economic and social importance. We work with our business community to create economic growth and an exceptional quality of life for all residents.

The Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce has been a part of the local community physician recruitment committee for about four years, with participation by Executive Director Sherry Martell and Past President Ron Smith.

While the Chamber is primarily a business association, and our advocacy work with government often relates to more business specific issues, we sometimes engage with stakeholders to address issues impacting business that are of a social nature such as physician recruitment and health care.

We deeply value the relationship we have with the local physician staff and health-care stakeholders. As the business community, we believe that health care is a shared responsibility of government and private sector. There is, and has been historically, a great appreciation of our local health care community evidenced by private sector support, such as the core fundraising for our regional hospital.

During the past number of years, the Chamber has proposed a number of ways the private sector would be willing and able to support our healthcare providers. It is our experience that there appears to be a lack of communication between the many and varied stakeholders that has been a barrier to providing additional, much-needed support for health care.

The business community, through the Chamber has also put aside funding for projects to assist with improving physician recruitment in this region. This has been communicated to the Health Authority and Department staff, local physicians and other stakeholders, along with suggestions on how the funds could be used to provide additional support. We are still holding these funds to collaborate when the opportunity arises.

We would like to have clarity on how communities, such as ours, can help fill gaps in health care.

The Chamber is a membership-based organization and the businesses we represent have shared they have experienced challenges in hiring and retaining employees due to the lack of family physicians in this region. This is deeply concerning however; we would like to reinforce that we are committed to work with you and your department on solutions.

Best regards,



Sherry Martell

Executive Director

Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce

 CC: Larry Harrison, MLA Colchester Musquodoboit valley

David Ritcey, MLA Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River

Tom Taggart, MLA Colchester North