

Atlantic Premiers Discuss Responses to COVID-19 and Regional Priorities

For Immediate Release

October 21, 2020 – Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Dr. Andrew Furey chaired a videoconference of the Council of Atlantic Premiers today with New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs, Prince Edward Island Premier Dennis King, and Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil.

The Atlantic Premiers discussed the significant health, social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and appreciate the cooperation and dedication of businesses, individuals and families throughout Atlantic Canada in containing the spread of the virus. Premiers committed to continuing the Atlantic Bubble subject to the advice of the Atlantic Chief Medical Officers of Health as the pandemic evolves.

Premiers thank the Prime Minister for his leadership throughout the pandemic and remain committed to working in partnership with the federal government to address the needs of Atlantic Canadians. Premiers called on the federal government for urgent action to ensure access to reliable and affordable regional air services in Atlantic Canada. Premiers also called on the federal government for sector specific funding to address the concerns of the tourism and hospitality industries.

Premiers are encouraged by the federal government's support in the recent Speech from the Throne for the "Atlantic Loop" to enhance energy transmission in the region. Through collaboration with the federal government on the Clean Power Roadmap for Atlantic Canada, the region is on an accelerated path to further transition to cleaner forms of non-emitting energy, such as wind, hydro, solar, tidal, and advanced small modular nuclear reactors. This shift will require federal investments to ensure that the transition to a low-carbon economy includes access to affordable and reliable clean power for Atlantic Canadians.

Atlantic Premiers are united with all of Canada's Premiers in seeking a rebalanced health care partnership with the federal government. Atlantic Premiers look forward to further discussions with federal, provincial, and territorial governments to ensure that federal funding for health care enables all jurisdictions to deliver the quality health care services that Canadians deserve. As health care needs evolve across the country, Atlantic Premiers emphasize the unique challenges facing Atlantic Canada, including aging population, high incidence of chronic disease, and rural population, which have significant impacts on the costs of delivering health care services. Funding arrangements that consider the unique needs in Atlantic Canada are essential to ensuring the region can address these challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been difficult for all Canadians, and especially our most vulnerable populations. Atlantic Premiers continue to work with their provincial and territorial counterparts, along with the federal government, to ensure the necessary supports are in place to protect long-term care residents.

Atlantic Premiers also met with federal Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs Dominic LeBlanc to discuss federal and provincial collaboration on shared priorities in Atlantic Canada.

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