

## **Atlantic Premiers Meet to Discuss Regional Priorities**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**HALIFAX, NS (March 21, 2022)** – Atlantic Premiers met to discuss regional approaches to health care, economic recovery, cost of living, immigration and energy security.

As Chair of the Council of Atlantic Premiers, Premier Tim Houston of Nova Scotia welcomed Premier Blaine Higgs of New Brunswick, Premier Dennis King of Prince Edward Island and Premier Andrew Furey of Newfoundland and Labrador for the first in-person meeting of the Council since January 2020.

Premiers also met with Dominic LeBlanc, federal Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities and Sean Fraser, federal Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

Premiers condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine and expressed solidarity with Ukrainian people. The international crisis precipitated by Russia's war in Ukraine has brought into focus the need to strengthen Canada's energy security and enhance self-sufficiency.

Premiers urged the federal government to work with them to improve the region's energy security through the development of Canadian energy sources. They called on the federal government to provide financial support for the Atlantic Loop project to assist in the transition off coal by 2030. They invited federal ministers to work with them to further diversify the region's energy supply through the development of clean and renewable power from sources such as wind, solar and tidal power and small modular nuclear reactors.

Premiers expressed concerns with expected supply chain issues in relation to the Canadian Pacific rail strike. Given world circumstances and current supply chain issues, Premiers urged the federal government to address the issue immediately.

Atlantic Premiers expressed optimism about the region's ability to transition to a new phase of living with COVID-19. They look forward to welcoming visitors to the region and discussed ways to further promote economic recovery and growth.

Premiers recognize the mental and physical toll of the pandemic on residents and continue to express their appreciation of frontline and essential workers who have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic. They expressed their gratitude to those who followed public health measures throughout the past two years and urge those who have not already done so to book appointments for vaccines and boosters.

Busing is an important part of the transportation network for many Atlantic Canadians and the pandemic has highlighted the importance of accessible and affordable service. Premiers agreed to explore opportunities for regional solutions in busing.

Sustainable and quality health care continues to be a top priority for Atlantic Canadians. Premiers discussed progress on the Atlantic Health Care – “Accord of Guiding Principles” signed in September 2021. The Atlantic Provinces are working collaboratively to advance key health priorities under this Accord.

Premiers noted the recent vote in the United States Senate, approving a bill for permanent Daylight Saving Time in the US. Atlantic Premiers will work with other Premiers and the federal government to explore options for consistency should the Senate bill become law.

Premiers also discussed areas of shared priorities for federal partnership through the Atlantic Growth Strategy, which launched the Clean Power Road Map for Atlantic Canada and the successful Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program. Premiers look forward to further developing partnerships with the federal government in areas such as immigration, labour market and workforce development, flexible and responsive infrastructure funding, the ocean economy, and clean energy.

Premiers will meet in June for their next meeting.

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For media inquiries, please contact:

Catherine Klimek, Office of the Premier, Nova Scotia, 902-717-1020

Nicolle Carlin, Office of the Premier, New Brunswick, 506-453-7494

Adam Ross, Office of the Premier, Prince Edward Island, 902-368-4400

Meghan McCabe, Office of the Premier, Newfoundland and Labrador, 709-729-3960