



PRESS RELEASE

from the N.S. Federation of Labour

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Job losses in the Valley point to need for balanced representation on NS Economic Advisory Panel

Halifax, N.S. – Nova Scotia Federation of Labour President Rick Clarke received word from Premier Rodney MacDonald this week that the provincial government will not expand the newly-appointed Economic Advisory Panel to include representation from labour.

Clarke is disappointed with this decision especially after having a lengthy meeting with Premier MacDonald on January 8th on matters relating to the current economic crisis facing us; representatives of unions from across the province and Clarke were optimistic that the Government would give serious consideration to their position to expand this Committee to include representation of workers in Nova Scotia as well as employers.

“The advisory panel is made up entirely of business representatives, so the Premier is only hearing from their perspective,” said Clarke. “We need the voices of labour and credible policy groups like the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – NS to give the Premier the critical analysis the Nova Scotian economy needs.

“The Premier has indicated he would prefer that a parallel panel with the same terms of reference as the advisory panel be formed; but this is not the way to go—we believe a joint panel with equal representation at the same table talking about economic solutions for Nova Scotia is the best and more productive vehicle to discuss areas for economic recovery.

“The recent surprise announcement by ACA Co-operative of its closure of Eastern Protein Foods and New Minas office is yet another reason we need a balanced Advisory Board—this closures will be devastating to the community and to the Nova Scotia economy.

“Although disappointed, we will give consideration to the Premier’s preferred option of a parallel advisory panel,” said Clarke. “In saying this, we urge the Premier to re-consider his preference.”

With the federal budget looming, Clarke says he is hopeful that enough transfer funding will come to Nova Scotia from the federal government to help the provincial government avoid a deficit, but in the current economic crisis, now is the time to put resources into building infrastructure and not the time to be discussing cutting spending.

“During an economic recession, it is not the time for to Government tighten its belt, it is time to invest in our recovery and the future through spending in much needed areas such as infrastructure, including bridges, roads, health care, education, etc.; to stimulate the economy,” Clarke said in conclusion.

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For more information, please contact Rick Clarke at 454.6735 (office) or 434.5612 (home)

The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour is the provincial voice of the Labour Movement, representing 70,000 members in over 400 union locals.