



Labour Federation says minority government can work for Nova Scotians

Halifax, N.S. - The recently released Nova Scotia Provincial Budget is another example of the benefits Nova Scotians can expect from a minority Government, a Labour spokesperson said today.

Rick Clarke, President of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour said some of the better social programs and benefits to people have come out of minority governments for the simple reason that all parties generally work together and the views and concerns of the average citizen seem to be heard and receive a bit more attention.

“Although some will not be happy with the change to the personal income tax structure and rate changes, it is far better for Nova Scotia and Nova Scotians than the other obvious options that could have been on the table,” Clarke said. “We could have faced a health surtax, cuts in services, even more user fees or, through for-profit service, even higher fees for services now provided through the public service.

“We have long advocated that budgets are about choices and in the past our governments have made some very wrong choices for people -- this time they appear to be on the right track,” said Clarke.

“The budget did include some modest increases in the tax level for larger business corporations and financial institutions and although they are bemoaning these increases, we do not believe they will lead to an exodus from the province or prevent future investment,” Clarke said.

“We believe other incentives provided by the taxpayers to business, such as low interest or no-interest loans; loan forgiveness and wage subsidies to businesses who locate in Nova Scotia or who may expand their operation, far outweigh any cut in profit-margin which may be seen from the modest increase in their tax structure. Overall, businesses will fare quite well, while at the same time contribute to the system that supports them.

Clarke also pointed out that small businesses, like low income earners who retain the 10% income tax cut, did receive support in this budget which is a positive move, for like low income earners, small businesses tend to spend a higher portion of their disposal income on necessities and both received much-needed support.

“We are concerned that the government is not giving the post-secondary education system the support it deserves, with students still facing skyrocketing tuition rates and we will continue to push this issue as we always have,” said Clarke.

In conclusion, Clarke again stated that he sincerely believes the current make-up of this minority government is a factor in the balanced approach seen in this budget.

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