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4 October 2024

The Honourable Barbara Adams  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General for Nova Scotia

Department of Justice  
1690 Hollis Street  
P.O. Box 7  
Halifax, NS  
B3J 2L6

Email: [justmin@novascotia.ca](mailto:justmin@novascotia.ca)  
Subject: Request for an Organized Crime Unit in South West Nova Scotia

Dear Minister Adams,

We write to you with deep concern regarding the alarming rise in violence and criminal activities that continue to threaten the safety and livelihood of our communities, particularly within the high-value fishing sectors in Nova Scotia. The current situation, marked by acts of arson, assault and property damage demands swift and decisive intervention.

The challenges we face are far-reaching and extend well beyond the sphere of marine resource management. We are now observing indicators of organized crime activity in the area, including increased coordination among individuals exploiting existing enforcement gaps, operating with little fear of reprisal due to the high-profit, low-risk nature of their crimes.

Furthermore, fisheries crime has not received the attention it deserves as a serious criminal issue. Too often, these offenses have been seen through the narrow lens of regulatory breaches rather than being treated as the significant threats to public safety and economic stability that they truly are. The leniency in penalties has only emboldened criminal elements to further entrench their operations.

We urge the immediate provision of additional law enforcement resources to support the efforts of local detachments. The scope of crime affecting our region has far surpassed illegal fishing and has now become a full-fledged public safety crisis.

It is more important than ever that we address this matter following the apparent inaction of the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) in enforcing existing regulations. The situation is rapidly

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deteriorating, and we are facing the consequences of unchecked criminal activity and are concerned it will expand into Shelburne County. Inaction is not an option.

We strongly advocate for a coordinated and multi-agency response, encompassing collaboration among law enforcement bodies at all governmental levels. This includes enhanced intelligence-sharing and cooperation with international partners, as well as the active involvement of agencies such as CBSA, labour, and tax authorities. It is only through such a comprehensive approach that we can begin to dismantle the organized criminal networks currently operating with impunity.

Given the escalating violence, especially in the region of Clare, and the increasing risk to public safety, we also encourage you to form an Organized Crime Unit. Dedicated investigative teams, equipped to target and dismantle criminal organizations at their core, are urgently needed. The failure to act decisively in this moment risks not only the security of our communities but also the integrity of our natural resources and the rule of law itself.

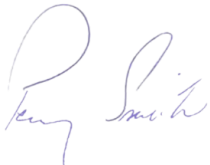
We appreciate your attention to this urgent matter and stand ready to collaborate with your office to address these pressing needs. Our communities depend on swift and effective action to ensure a safer and more secure future.

Yours Sincerely,

Warden Penny Smith  
Municipality of Shelburne

Warden Eddie Nickerson  
Municipality of Barrington

Mayor Rex Stoddard  
Town of Clark's Harbour



Mayor Cory Nickerson  
Town of Lockeport



Mayor Harald Locke  
Town of Shelburne



Cc: Chris d'Entremont, MP West Nova  
Rick Perkins, MP South Shore-St. Margarets  
Minister Dominic LeBlanc  
Minister Kent Smith  
Maritime Fisherman Union  
Municipalité de Clare  
Jeff LeBlanc, RCMP  
Mark MacPherson, RCMP  
Warden Yvon LeBlanc - Municipality of Clare