



Maw-lukutijik Saqmaq
Assembly of Nova Scotia
Mi'kmaw Chiefs

Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn
Negotiation Office
75 Treaty Trail
Millbrook, NS B6L 1W3

Tel: 902.843.3880
Fax: 902.843.3882
Toll Free: 1.888.803.3880

February 26, 2025

The Honourable Tim Houston
Premier of Nova Scotia
Office of the Premier
P.O. Box 726
Halifax, NS B3J 2T3
Via E-mail: premier@novascotia.ca

Premier Houston,

Re: Hydraulic Fracturing & Uranium Exploration and Mining Prohibition

On February 18, 2025, legislation was introduced that would create potential for hydraulic fracturing to access onshore natural gas and that would repeal the *Uranium Exploration and Mining Prohibition Act* to allow research about uranium's presence and distribution in the Mi'kma'ki (Unceded land of the Mi'kmaq), signalling an intention to lift the uranium exploration and mining ban.

In October of last year we wrote to you regarding the province's lack of engagement with Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn (KMK) and the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs (the Assembly) in the lead-up to Bill 471 on offshore wind. This failure was compounded when the province scheduled a *single day* for submissions before the Law Amendments Committee, on the day before KMK and the Assembly were scheduled to present to the Standing Senate Committee on Bill C-49, its federal counterpart.

Last week's sweeping legislative proposal is another example of the provincial government choosing not to engage or consult with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia prior to introducing significant changes in the mining sector that will directly impact the Mi'kmaq's section 35 rights.

The Province of Nova Scotia is aware of and is a signatory to the *Terms of Reference for a Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Consultation Process (TOR)*. The Province also sits at several tables with KMK and the Assembly where these changes should have been discussed but were

never raised or flagged for us. From a relationship perspective, these types of repetitive omissions are highly erosive.

The Assembly has strongly opposed hydraulic fracturing and uranium mining in the past. The Assembly has made its position clear in past correspondences to the Department of Natural Resources (formerly Department of Energy & Mines). It is unacceptable that this government is fast-tracking the extraction of natural resources that will be permanently devalue and damage our unceded lands and adversely impact the exercise of our section 35 rights. All resource extraction developments and strategic level planning decisions impacting our unceded lands must be accompanied by consultation and discussions of compensation and mitigation.

None of the recent announcements on fracking, uranium mineral exploration or lithium mining development were included in the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia's campaigning platform during the past election. It is very concerning that our Provincial Government is proposing such dramatic changes in sectors for which they did not receive a mandate from the people of this province.

All Nova Scotians are treaty peoples. It is disheartening to see our newly elected provincial partners disregard the Mi'kmaq and the previous battles our peoples have fought (such as opposing hydraulic fracturing). We do not wish to stand in the way of ethical and well-planned developments that respect our s. 35 rights and provide opportunities for our people. However, when the province pushes through hurried legislative changes that reverse longstanding policies in the name of Nova Scotia being "open for business," it sends a clear message that our rights and our voices do not matter to this administration.

It is our expectation consultation will be forthcoming on current and upcoming planning decisions which may lead to major shifts in the resource extraction practices of the province. These developments will have a direct impact on The Mi'kmaq's s. 35 rights. The provincial government has a legal and constitutional duty to consult with The Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and this cannot be ignored.

We eagerly look forward to the Premier's response.

Yours in Recognition of Mi'kmaw Rights and Title,

Chief Carol Potter
Lead Chief for Environment, Energy & Mining

Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs

Chief Cory Julian
Lead Chief for Environment, Energy & Mining
Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs

Chief Tamara Young
Lead Chief for Environment, Energy & Mining
Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs

C.C.:
Patrick Butler, Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn
Minister Leah Martin, Minister of L'nu Affairs
Minister Tory Rushton, Minister of Natural Resources