

May 31, 2021

Honourable Iain Rankin  
Office of the Premier  
P.O. Box 726  
Halifax, NS  
B3J 2T3

6589 Chebucto Road, Suite 201  
Halifax, NS B3L 1L9

Tel. 902.423.4480  
800.948.4267  
Fax. 902.422.0184

[www.tians.org](http://www.tians.org)

Dear Premier Rankin,

On behalf of the TIANS Board of Directors, we are writing today as follow up to the planned re-opening announced on Friday May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021.



While we appreciate the COVID-19 Pandemic is first and foremost a health crisis, it is a very real economic crisis for the Nova Scotia Tourism Industry. In 2020, Tourism in Nova Scotia lost \$1.6 Billion in revenue. In March of 2020, the Industry employed 50,000 Nova Scotians, as of May 2021 we are still down 25,000 jobs. No sector has been harder hit, and we believe a full economic recovery cannot happen without a full tourism recovery. Tourism is a main street industry and for every \$1 spent, another \$3.2 is generated in the community.

We are seeking clarification on some specific areas and welcome further dialogue.

In regards to re-opening of the borders, since Friday we have had numerous calls with airlines and others seeking clarity on the proposed timeline of 75% one dose vaccinated. With the current timeframe noted as August and statements referencing that it “may be earlier,”– we cannot stress enough how crucial it is for airlines and airports to have firm dates. Accessing and preparing inventory, making decisions on routes will all need to be done over the next couple weeks. If we cannot provide that clarity, Nova Scotia will be greatly impacted in regards to air capacity for 2021. The same principle applies for other sectors that need to manage inventory i.e., car rentals, motorcoach, etc.

TIANS has been working with its Atlantic Partners on a number of coordinated initiatives to support a cohesive reopening plan. Last month on behalf of the Travel Trade Industry we submitted Draft Re-opening Guidelines for the Maritime Provinces to the Chief Medical Officers and relevant Ministers. Having a coordinated and consistent approach will enable tour operators and suppliers to confidently sell the region and support local businesses. In 2019 the tour operators sold 87,000 room nights in the Maritimes. Without the assurance of dates and consistency in guidelines, a number of Nova Scotia businesses will be left out of current sales plans underway.

Honourable Iain Rankin  
May 31, 2021  
Page 2

In regards to full re-opening we are getting numerous questions around labour and rights related to vaccination adherence. Businesses need guidance on changes to regulations and laws that will ensure a safe re-opening. They also need lead time to attract workers back, they are already facing recruitment and retention challenges for a number of reasons related to COVID-19 supports.

With re-opening dates announced, we believe Confidence and Marketing Campaigns have to start now. We understand Tourism Nova Scotia has both "in the ready" and we would ask that you approve dates for release, starting with the Confidence Campaign. We believe it is time to build pride and confidence for consumers and businesses. The timing is also good, as people begin to think about their plans to explore Nova Scotia in the coming months.

Premier, we have asked the Deputy Minister of Inclusive Economic Growth and Leadership at Tourism Nova Scotia to co- host a call with TIANS this week to address some of the immediate concerns regarding timing. We would urge you to encourage staff to escalate efforts to address issues and work with the Tourism Industry, as we begin the rebuild.

We offer our continued support during this extraordinary time; however, we do believe that we need to put as much effort into the economic rebuild as we have into managing the health crisis. Now is the time!

Sincerely,



Judy Saunders  
TIANS Chair



Darlene Grant Fiander  
TIANS President

cc Minister Labi Kousoulis  
Tourism Nova Scotia  
TIANS Board of Directors