

November 15, 2017

The Honourable Gerry Byrne
Minister of Fisheries and Land Resources

Dear Minister Byrne:

It has been my pleasure to work with you in Cabinet since December 2015. I am honoured that you have agreed to serve the people of our province in a new capacity as Minister of Fisheries and Land Resources. I am placing my trust in you to support economic development in the fisheries, aquaculture, agriculture, forestry, lands, wildlife and natural heritage sectors.

As we approach the mid-point of our mandate, we have a strong Cabinet. We are guided by our plan for sustainability and growth, The Way Forward. It focuses on strengthening our economy and creating private sector jobs, delivering better services, improving outcomes to promote a prosperous Newfoundland and Labrador, and improving public sector efficiency. I am asking you to deliver on this plan by leading the following:

Fisheries and Aquaculture

- Creating private sector jobs by implementing the Aquaculture Sector Work Plan to increase salmon and mussel production and research and development through our partnership with the Newfoundland Aquaculture Industry Association;
- Leading the establishment of a Seafood Marketing Council, whose mission will be to promote the Newfoundland and Labrador fishing industry, and to secure and expand market opportunities locally and globally;
- Working with the newly created Fisheries Advisory Council to develop a plan for cod revitalization and sustainable small scale fisheries;
- Supporting innovation and transformation in the fishery and seafood sectors through the Atlantic Fisheries Fund; and
- Advocating to the Federal Government to ensure aquaculture, fisheries and oceans policy and programming support reflects the best interests of our province.

Agriculture

- Implementing the Agriculture Sector Work Plan to increase the amount of food grown and produced locally in our province and create agricultural jobs through our partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture and Food First NL;
- Reviewing animal health and protection legislation and enforcement and establishing an Animal Protection Account;

- Partnering with the Federal Government to jointly fund agriculture development; and
- Completing a study on the full economic potential of the agriculture sector.

Forestry

- Implementing a sustainable forest management strategy;
- Working to increase timber allocations and harvest levels; and
- Investing in forestry research and development to support diversification in the areas of bioenergy, biorefining and engineered wood products.

Wildlife

- Implementing recent changes to the provincial Wildlife Act and Regulations that support inclusion, improve access and encourage participation in hunting.

Crown Lands and Natural Areas

- Enhancing access to Crown lands for the agricultural sector, municipalities and public;
- Releasing a natural areas system plan; and
- Developing a provincial wetlands strategy to avoid or reduce negative effects on our wetlands.

Together, Cabinet is responsible for achieving the targets set out in The Way Forward. Achieving these targets is critical to attaining inclusive growth, improving employment levels and reducing poverty and realizing financial sustainability. To support reaching these targets, I ask all Ministers to consider the impact of their decisions on the health of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians through our Health in All Policies approach. You must also consider whether your decisions are best positioning our province for economic and private sector job growth.

As Premier, I expect you to be open and transparent. We must use evidence and research and engage with the public, stakeholders and our Indigenous partners to inform our decisions. We must ensure that we are focused on service excellence. I have asked all Ministers to reduce red tape, adopt Lean continuous improvement principles and publish business standards for all major programs by March 31, 2018. I also expect all Ministers to work together to support our commitment to being a government that is digital-by-design.

In fulfilling your responsibility as Minister, you must ensure collaboration in a positive and constructive manner with your Cabinet colleagues. I take this opportunity to remind you that, as you carry out your responsibilities as a Member of the House of Assembly and Member of Cabinet, adhering to the Code of Conduct and the Conflict of Interest guidelines are mandatory to ensure you discharge your duties with the highest ethical standards.

Deputy Ministers are your key source of support and will provide you with advice in meeting your responsibilities. I expect you to develop a positive, respectful and trusting relationship with your Deputy Minister and the public service.

At the end of the day, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians want to see results. You must track and report on your progress towards completing the work outlined in this letter. We will continue to highlight our progress in our annual Way Forward report cards and annual performance reports. Together, we will improve health, social and economic outcomes and deliver high quality services for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dwight Ball", with a horizontal flourish underneath.

DWIGHT BALL
Premier