

# **DRIVING CHANGE: A PLATFORM FOR A BETTER NOVA SCOTIA**



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# **GUARANTEES MADE, GUARANTEES BROKEN**

Tim Houston and the Nova Scotia Progressive Conservative Party made loud and declarative statements during the 2021 provincial election. The NSPC campaigned on a platform centred on “Fixing Health Care,” restoring public trust, and modernising the provincial economy. Their campaign was defined by a series of strong guarantees—many framed as urgent, actionable, and transformative solutions to long-standing challenges across health care, housing, transparency, and economic growth.

In 2025, however, the government’s performance reveals substantial divergence between these election commitments and their implementation. A clear pattern has emerged: major planks of the 2021 platform have been delayed, diluted, walked back, or abandoned entirely. These reversals have occurred alongside worsening provincial indicators, including increased homelessness, strained health-care access, persistent staffing shortages, and weakened transparency mechanisms.

Tim Houston’s 2021 platform positioned the Progressive Conservative Party as the only party capable of delivering urgent and systemic change to healthcare. The reality, however, highlights how they have utterly failed in this area. Since Tim Houston’s government took office, the Need a Family Practice Registry has more than doubled. Once this became a stain, the government removed or limited public reporting on the registry and changed the criteria of who to include to bring down the numbers. Limiting the data doesn’t fix the problem. ER unscheduled closures have increased year-over-year, with ERs being closed for 31,721 hours in 2024. This is a 22% increase in unscheduled closures from 2023. Rural ERs are more acutely impacted by these closures, bringing cascading issues for the communities depending on these services. Nova Scotia is in the midst of a crisis concerning our health care, and the PC government is not only asleep at the wheel but steering Nova Scotians off a cliff. Nova Scotia ambulances continue to miss mandated response times. The Auditor General's 2023 report on response times called Nova Scotia’s ambulance service as being in “critical state.” The response from the PC government to this critical state wasn’t to look inward at what is wrong, but to announce they will just fine the service when it misses mandated response times. This isn’t a solution.

Healthcare has become demonstrably worse in this province, not better. Tim Houston has completely failed in his healthcare guarantee to Nova Scotians,

Housing was another key plank in Tim Houston's 2021 platform. This is yet another area where the Government has a proven track record of failing to address the strain and has allowed the situation to become worse.

Precarious housing in Nova Scotia has gotten worse since 2021. The government still lacks clarification and definitions on what affordability means. The rate of Nova Scotia households in Core Housing need continues to rise, along with rent instability and the weakening of renters' supports and protections in Nova Scotia. Rents have far exceeded what Nova Scotians can afford, resulting in increased homelessness in the province, including working homeless. This has also led to strain and extreme pressure on the province's underfunded and under sourced public housing agency. Tim Houston has allowed for loopholes in fixed leases, rent increases above the cap, failed to create a Residential Tenancies Enforcement Unit, and more. It's become harder for students in Nova Scotia to find affordable housing, with no strategy in place to address this. The only strategy the government came up with was a two-year pilot with Happipad for 1.35 million dollars. This pilot program saw a total of 60 formal leases signed. That amounts to a Government cost of \$22,500CAD per lease.

Tim Houston has failed on housing affordability. Tim Houston guaranteed that housing would get better under his government. His government has only made living here harder and worse.

Tim Houston has completely abandoned his better paycheque guarantee for Nova Scotians. Tim Houston has abandoned transparency and accountability after promising to make the provincial information commissioner an independent officer of the legislature. He has abandoned stable internet for rural Nova Scotia. Tim Houston abandoned his promise on mental health coverage. And the Nova Scotia Loyal program he promised, a broad rewards scheme redeemable for things such as licence renewals and more, has turned into a sole-source contract to his friends at Sobeys, where Nova Scotians can get Scene points for select goods, on certain days and Air Miles at NSLC.

Tim Houston has failed the people of Nova Scotia, and Nova Scotians deserve better.

# **WHERE THE NOVA SCOTIA LIBERAL PARTY (NSLP) IS, AND WHAT IT NEEDS**

There is no other way to put it, the NSLP is lost and disconnected. We have lost who we are, we have lost our grassroots and EDA's, and we have lost hard-working and knowledgeable people passionate about Nova Scotia. Most importantly, we have lost the trust and confidence of the people of Nova Scotia. The post-mortem review of the 2021 election highlighted this, and these same issues continued and were magnified in the 2024 election.

The NSLP is seen as a top-down, heavily centralized party with firm control held in the hands of a few people in Halifax. Our last two elections have failed to capture and speak to what matters to Nova Scotians. The 2021 post-mortem discussed EDAs and grassroots feeling alienated, neglected, and disrespected. First-time candidates felt isolated, unsupported, and completely unaware of expectations and campaign running. When you leave your EDAs, grassroots, and incredible candidates out to dry, it signals a lack of respect and disorganization at the highest levels and erodes local trust in the party. Communication was broken, and this left those in the party and Nova Scotians without a cohesive communications plan that reflected the real needs of Nova Scotia. Both campaigns feel flat because they missed the mark; the NSLP was talking down to Nova Scotians instead of talking to Nova Scotians.

The NSLP is at an inflection point. With only two seats in the legislature, the party is struggling to connect, recruit, draw donations, and find relevancy. Our voice is seen as weak. Nova Scotia and Nova Scotians need a revitalized, focused, and passionate Liberal Party. A party that can reflect honestly on its shortcomings and fully embrace the incredible potential at its feet. Pundits and our opposition see this party as dead and have written its obituary.

The great thing about being written off is that those who have never see it coming. This party isn't dead; it's in a state of renewal and revival, and embracing this state provides the NSLP with significant power and force.

And it starts with the right leader.

It starts at the top. Renewal starts with a leader who can connect, engage, actively listen, and lean into the uncomfortable conversations with dignity, respect, and value. It starts with a leader who can see the potential in this party, has the humility to accept and learn from the past and holds honest conversations with Nova Scotians.

It starts with a leader who can bring this party back together and move us past internal issues and quarrels. A leader who is open, communicative and honest. This party needs a leader that people can trust, not because of the words they say, but from their experiences, their history, their successes and their actions.

It starts with a leader passionate for Nova Scotia, for Nova Scotians, and the potential this province has to succeed. A leader who hasn't spent their entire life in politics, but has spent it working tirelessly for Nova Scotians and Canadians. A leader who doesn't lead from the back or deflect responsibility, but owns mistakes because they know they allow for growth and reflection. They lead the charge.

It starts with a leader who understands the importance of relationships, of honest conversations and doesn't act like the smartest person in the room. They listen with integrity and empathy and seek solutions and understanding from multiple perspectives. They don't push good people out.

It starts with a leader focused on making this province better for everyone, not just the few friends or donor connections they have. It's an understanding that being Premier is an honour and daily privilege, not a right.

It starts with a leader who still believes politics can be ethical. Political climates in North America and globally are becoming more toxic, insidious, and overtly malicious. We need only look to the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada and the President of the United States as examples. Deciding to run for office means putting a lot at stake. This party needs a leader who understands this and will support and stand beside those who put their hat in the ring and decide to run. This party deserves unity, deserves confidence, deserves hope, deserves pride, deserves excitement, and a belief in what Nova Scotia can become. This party deserves this because the people of Nova Scotia deserve this, and it's only the NSLP that will bring this energy and vision next election.

It starts with me.

# **CAMPAIGN PLATFORM FOR NSLP LEADER**

## **Honest and Ethical Government – A Better Government For Nova Scotians.**

### **FACTS FIRST:**

#### **TIM HOUSTON'S PROMISES:**

- Hold fixed election dates;
- Giving the privacy commissioner "order-making power" to force public bodies to release records rather than leaving compliance optional;
- Reduce "back-room deals" and ensure systemic reporting and oversight;
- Respect the people of Nova Scotia.

#### **TIM HOUSTON'S FAILURES:**

- Broke his own fixed election law;
- Has yet to give the privacy commissioner order-making power;
- Has weakened accountability with the FOIPOP overhaul, instances of this are the removal of words requiring public bodies to be accountable, deleted sections that limit exemptions to very narrow cases, and amending the requirements for applicants;
- Eliminated the non-partisan communications agency Communications Nova Scotia, with personnel being rolled into the Premier's office;
- Limited media access to Government Ministers;
- Walked back or failed to modernize Nova Scotia's FOIPOP and transparency laws;
- Tim Houston's office was the 2024 recipient of the Code Of Silence Award for Outstanding Achievement in Government Secrecy by the Canadian Association of Journalists; and
- Complete disrespect and disregard for all Nova Scotians.

Government institutions in a democratic world require robust transparency to ensure meaningful accountability and to hold elected officials responsible for their actions.

Trust in our democratic systems and institutions is the very foundations of what makes our democratic system work and give it power.

The current government is eroding these foundational institutions. The weakening or removal of oversight bodies and commissioners, the removal of language devoted to full transparency in legislation, and hiding Ministers away to shield them from their failures.

Democracy in Nova Scotia has become weaker and is at risk under Tim Houston. Nova Scotians deserve a government that believes in democracy, has stood up and fought and bled for democracy, and holds close to their heart how important democracy is and how easy it is to have it taken away.

### **MY VISION:**

- Implement proportional representation for Nova Scotia provincial elections;
- Pass legislation to give the Privacy Commissioner order-making power and make them an officer of the Legislature;
- Empower the Nova Scotia Conflict of Interest Commissioner's office with modern legislation, including own-motion investigations and expanded jurisdiction;
- Review and amend the FOIPOP overhaul to ensure transparency and accountability for government agencies and personnel. Remove unnecessary burdens imposed by the Houston government on requesters;
- Review the use of NDAs and establish criteria of when NDAs can, and can't be used, ensuring NDAs aren't used to cover up crimes or silence victims;
- Revitalize Communications Nova Scotia as a non-partisan communications agency;
- Revamp the structure of the Department of Natural Resources, making the health and safety of our province and Nova Scotians the departmental priority again;
- Hold structured media availability times for all Government officials, allowing media access and accountability in a public forum; and
- Undertake a review of legislation with a 21st-century lens, focusing on digital sovereignty for Nova Scotians, modernizing government systems through a security lens, and protecting democratic values.

# **Housing Affordability – Shifting the Mindset to Housing as a Public Good.**

## **FACTS FIRST:**

### **TIM HOUSTON'S PROMISES:**

- Increase overall housing supply in the province;
- Support first-time home buyers;
- Cut red tape to speed up housing construction;
- Reduce homelessness through shelters and transitional housing; and
- Long-term provincial housing strategy with targets;

### **TIM HOUSTON'S FAILURES:**

- Housing has only increased marginally, with costs continuing to climb and housing being even more acute;
- No clear social housing quotas in their strategic plan, uses the terms market and affordability almost interchangeably;
- Over-reliance on mixed-income market development, subsidies, and ill-defined "support programs";
- Failed to deliver a program for first-time home buyers and has abandoned those seeking home ownership;
- Students of our many universities still can't find housing, and government efforts to address this have wasted taxpayer money;
- Little to no non-market housing; and
- Homelessness has gotten worse and continues to increase in Nova Scotia.

For years, current policies and legislation in Nova Scotia and Canada have believed that if we build more market supply of homes, deregulate red tape, and build up, the market will stabilize and prices will come down over time.

We are wrong. Supply, upbuilding, and red tape modernization alone won't address Nova Scotia's housing affordability issues.

Young Nova Scotians have given up on the idea of ever owning a home. A government needs to understand that a shelter and a home are foundational; it all starts with a secure place to call home.

Housing is a speculative market. New housing units are often bought as an investment, betting on the future speculative profit of that property. This drives up costs.

If we want to make housing affordable, robust, and available to all Nova Scotians, we need to change our mindset and paradigm on how to achieve this. Thankfully, there are housing models globally we can learn from to achieve affordable, realistic, and consistent housing.

### **MY VISION:**

- Adopt and enshrine housing as a public good, and it is the foundation of all success;
- Adopt a definition for affordable housing, allowing for government benchmarks;
- Implement a robust, scaled project to build non-market homes. This building project would be modelled similarly to non-market housing programs in Finland and Paris. Non-marketing housing is widely seen as the most effective and proven method for maintaining affordability, will keep housing stock around a healthy 4%, and will not remove or displace private market housing or those who own property;
- Create a Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation (NSHDC) as a hybrid model of the Vienna and Finland models to manage and oversee the production of non-market housing in the province;
- Aggressively pursue funding programs and beneficial partnerships with the Federal Government to support construction funding;
- Target empty speculative properties with taxes as modelled in Vancouver and Paris;
- Unlock public lands for housing through a complete inventory of underused public lands in the province;
- Expand rapid housing with investments and partnerships in modern construction technologies such as modular homes, prefab homes, 3D printed homes, and tiny homes;

- Modernize rental legislation, including closing loopholes in fixed-term leases, establish the Residential Tenancies Enforcement Unit, digitize the tenancy dispute system, and protect landlords from serial non-payment abuses;
- Adopt a Housing First strategy to end chronic homelessness. This strategy involves providing housing first for stability and then connecting the person with health, mental health, addiction, employment services, or other needed support to address the root cause; and
- Review transitional homelessness supports for situations where homelessness occurs (job loss, substance abuse, leaving violence, natural disasters), where a needs assessment can be conducted to determine the complexity of the situation and determine housing needs.

# **Cost-of-Living & Affordability – Making life in Nova Scotia Cost Less.**

## **FACTS FIRST:**

### **TIM HOUSTON'S PROMISES:**

- Better Paycheque Guarantee;
- Increase the minimum wage in Nova Scotia;
- Impose a cap on electricity increases;
- Continue support programs such as school lunches; and
- Build more housing for Nova Scotians;

### **TIM HOUSTON'S FAILURES:**

- Abandoned his Better Pay Cheque Guarantee made in 2021;
- Nova Scotia had a poverty rate of 13.1% in 2022, according to Statistics Canada data, the highest among all provinces;
- 28.9% of Nova Scotia households were categorized as food insecure in Statistics Canada 2022 data, the highest of all provinces;
- Food banks in Nova Scotia saw a 10.3% increase in 2025 from 2024;
- The top reasons for food bank use are high cost of food, low wages, rising costs of essential bills, inflation, and unstable employment;
- Dipropionate tax cuts for low to middle-income Nova Scotians;
- Inadequate minimum wage for Nova Scotians;
- Food prices have risen above average inflation without supports;
- Inefficient temporary rebates and supports for middle to low-income Nova Scotians; and
- Constantly growing heating costs with no end in sight to these costs.

Nova Scotia has some of the highest rates of food-insecure homes, hungry children, strained food banks, and poverty rates. All of this has been under Tim Houston's Government and under their watch.

Nova Scotia's minimum wage is one of the worst nationally, with low purchasing power when adjusted for inflation. Nova Scotia has the largest national gap between minimum

wage vs living wage, reflecting how difficult it is to live in this beautiful province. Nova Scotia has one of the highest rates of residential electricity rates nationally. All this to say that living in this incredibly beautiful province is tough, and Tim Houston and his government are doing nothing to try to make this province more affordable for all Nova Scotians, except for his close big donor friends. Nova Scotians deserve better; they deserve hope in change.

### **MY VISION:**

- Develop a food security strategy that focuses on coordinating and investing in local NS agriculture, distribution networks, retail markets, and community groups and services such as food banks;
- Create a food security tax credit for middle to low-income households;
- Establish structured funding and support for NS farmers and farmers' markets;
- Evaluate rural food distribution networks and assess if regional hubs are required;
- Introduce supermarket transparency legislation, mandating quarterly reporting of anonymized data breakdowns of retailer costs vs markup costs;
- Convene a working group to determine the most cost-effective measures for implementation of a working wage in Nova Scotia;
- Create a high-level committee to identify methods to increase power competition and market liberalization programmes, incentives for decentralized power generation such as rooftop solar and microgrids, enhance renewable power generation efforts, and determine if making NSP or the power grid provincial Crown corporations is beneficial; and
- Review energy legislation to close loopholes, implement stricter cost-control measures, modernize rate increase criteria, and strengthen energy regulation.
- Work with the Federal Government to streamline foreign qualifications and the creation of a provincial recognition office to evaluate foreign credentials quickly and determine bridging programs if needed.

# **Bold and Impactful Health Care – Less Guarantees, More Action.**

## **FACTS FIRST:**

### **TIM HOUSTON'S PROMISES:**

- To fix health care;
- Made a Better Health Care Guarantee;
- Made a Universal Mental-Health Care Guarantee;
- Expand primary care;
- Recruit more health care workers;

### **TIM HOUSTON'S FAILURES:**

- The Need a Family Practice Registry has more than doubled;
- Universal Mental-Health Care Guarantee is unfulfilled;
- Unscheduled ER closures are increasing year-over-year;
- 2023 – 24 fiscal year saw a net increase of only 10 family physicians;
- No transparency in health care funding agreements;
- Critical staffing issues remain, with job vacancy rates for registered nurses around 15%, more than double the government's target;
- Strained and gap-filled EMS service;
- Over-reliance on private sector contracts, limiting accountability; and
- More money spent for less return, highlighting a mismanagement of public funds on health care.

Canada's public health-care system is a core part of our national identity. It is grounded in the belief that care should be based on need, not your bank account or credit score. Our system of health care reflects a social contract built on mutual trust: Canadians trust their governments to protect and strengthen this system, and in return, governments are expected to ensure transparency, accountability, and meaningful improvements in quality of care. When the health-care system falters — through long wait times, lack of access to primary care, or under-resourced hospitals — that trust erodes.

When people have timely access to doctors, emergency services, mental-health supports, and preventative care, they are healthier, safer, and better able to contribute to their families, workplaces, and communities. A strong health-care system reduces suffering, prevents avoidable illness, and ensures that no one is forced to choose between their health and financial security.

Maintaining this trust is essential because public confidence is what allows governments to make bold changes, allocate public resources effectively, and uphold the universal, equitable health care that Canadians value so deeply.

Mental health is a critical part of Nova Scotia's health-care crisis, because the province cannot hope to fix its overstretched system while so many people struggle to access timely, affordable, and appropriate mental-health support. When counselling waitlists are long, emergency rooms become the default entry point for those in crisis, adding pressure to an already strained system. Unaddressed mental-health needs also deepen social and economic challenges — from housing instability to lost productivity — and disproportionately affect young people, rural communities, and those facing trauma or poverty. Strengthening mental-health services is therefore not just a compassionate priority but an essential component of rebuilding trust in health care, reducing ER overcrowding, and ensuring that Nova Scotians receive the comprehensive care they deserve.

#### **MY VISION:**

- Creation of a mental health provincial strategy, designed to provide empathetic support and systems in place;
- Review the pilot programs for Mobile Mental Health Response Teams and identify strengths and weaknesses to make them more effective and move into rural areas;
- Fast-track international medical students and foreign-trained health support workers;
- Integrate regional community-based care hubs, bringing essential primary health services under one roof based on geographic populations;
- Creation of a Provincial Health Workforce Strategy for resource planning, retention, and forecasting of future needs;

- Recruit new physicians with aggressive incentive programs for long-term commitments, with bonus incentives to move to rural areas;
- Reduce bureaucratic creep and burdens, enabling new health technologies and ideas to come forward;
- Review virtual care options to augment and complement in-person care, ensuring that Nova Scotians have readily available access to proper health information;
- Data-driven resource allocation to ensure resources are provided to the most impacted areas;
- Identify partnerships with non-profits and regions to expand community-based care and long-term care;
- Conduct a comprehensive workforce analysis of paramedic staffing levels;
- Data-driven ambulance deployment to address high-need areas;
- Review internal structures such as schedules and overtime to prevent burnout;
- Integrate paramedics into the broader health system to optimize patient care and reduce unnecessary ER admissions;
- Upgrade paramedic equipment, vehicles, and technology to ensure proper care of Nova Scotians;
- Fast-track training programs for paramedics, with incentives and bonuses for employment in Nova Scotia;
- Recruit within Canada and internationally those trained as paramedics, providing incentives for those who come to Nova Scotia;
- Provide funding for retrofitting medical facilities to allow for proper smudging areas;
- Invest in training for health care providers, from elders, to learn the Mi'kmaw culture and healing traditions, including trauma-informed care;
- Develop policies for the use of traditional medicines according to Mi'kmaw culture;
- Fund and promote Mi'kmaw-led health initiatives, including community healing programs, wellness circles;
- Partnerships with First Nations organizations to address the lack of Mi'kmaw healing traditions in health care spaces; and
- Enshrining in legislation that Mi'kmaw traditional healing is a valid health approach within current health care for Mi'kmaw people.

# Human & Sex Trafficking and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) – Tackling the Corridor and the Violence.

## FACTS FIRST:

### STATISTICS ON HOW BAD THIS ISSUE IS:

- According to Statistics Canada, Nova Scotia recorded 4.5 police-reported incidents of human trafficking per 100,000 population in 2022, significantly higher than the national rate of approximately 1.4 per 100,000;
- Data from Statistics Canada shows Nova Scotia has consistently recorded the highest police-reported rate of human trafficking among Canadian provinces in the last decade;
- Between 2014 and 2024, Nova Scotia recorded an average annual police-reported human trafficking rate of approximately 4.1 incidents per 100,000 population, compared with a national average of roughly 1.2 per 100,000;
- Analysis done by Statistics Canada of police-reported human trafficking incidents between 2011 and 2021 found that 41% of incidents included an additional criminal violation, most commonly offences related to the sex trade;
- Data from Statistics Canada shows that approximately 94% of detected victims of police-reported human trafficking between 2012 and 2022 were women and girls;
- The Nova Scotia Trafficking and Exploitation Services System identifies commercial sexual exploitation, including the sexual exploitation of children, as a central component of human trafficking cases in Nova Scotia;
- Research and law-enforcement reporting indicate that Halifax functions as a key operational hub in Atlantic Canadian trafficking networks, where victims may be recruited, exploited locally, or transported between provinces;
- According to Statistics Canada, rates of police-reported intimate partner violence in Nova Scotia are typically higher in rural communities than in urban areas, reflecting a broader national trend.
- Police-reported domestic violence data indicate that women represent the majority of victims, accounting for roughly three-quarters of reported cases in Nova Scotia.
- Historical crime data from Statistics Canada indicate that in 2011 Nova Scotia recorded 708 sexual assaults, with approximately 82% of victims identified as female and 97% of accused persons identified as male.

- In that same year, over one hundred sexual assault cases involved victims under the age of 18, highlighting the significant impact of sexual violence on children and youth.
- Data compiled from police reporting and provincial monitoring indicate that at least 35 women were killed in Nova Scotia as a result of intimate partner violence between 2002 and 2021.
- Between October 2024 and March 2025, eight people died in Nova Scotia in incidents connected to intimate partner violence, including seven women and one man, according to publicly reported police investigations and provincial reporting.

### **TIM HOUSTON'S PROMISES:**

- Nova Scotia appointed a second Crown Attorney specifically for human trafficking;
- Budget 2022 – 2023 provided \$328,00CAD for Crown Attorney, a legal assistant, a paralegal, and training;
- Public Prosecutors' Service expanded its human-trafficking prosecution team, with four Crown Attorneys, a paralegal, and assistants.
- HRP and RCMP have a combined Nova Scotia Human Trafficking Unit;
- Provincially funded navigators to help victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation;
- The Government committed \$2.95 million over three years for GBA violence supports;
- Nova Scotia supports the Trafficking & Exploitation Services System (TESS), a multi-sector network of organizations that delivers coordinated services; and
- Budget 2025 – 2026 includes \$100 million across government for GBV initiatives.

### **TIM HOUSTON'S FAILURES:**

- Former Justice Minister Brad Johns stated that domestic violence in Nova Scotia wasn't an epidemic;
- Unstable and piecemeal funding, no core structured funding;
- Organizations are at or over capacity for support in these areas;
- Bureaucratic barriers for survivors and those fleeing IPV and GBV; and
- Reactive government stance, no urgency to address the issue.

IPV and GBV aren't getting better in Nova Scotia; it's getting worse. Eight people died between October 2024 and March 2025 from IPV. Nova Scotia is above the National Average in IPV and GBV, even more acute in rural areas.

Halifax and Nova Scotia are hubs for human and sex trafficking, and the problem isn't getting better. Human trafficking, IPV, and GBV have significant parallels. Traffickers target women and girls primarily of racialized backgrounds and systemically groom them to enter the sex industry.

I know this area well. As an investigator into human/child trafficking, including sex trafficking and the Com networks, I see the horrors of these activities and how traffickers operate to conduct grooming and engagement activities. I have deep connections with organizations and personnel dedicated and passionate about breaking these organized groups, rescuing victims, and working to put traffickers in jail. I've seen firsthand the joy and tears of a victim when they know they are free, and I've seen the fear they have about what comes next and how to rebuild their lives.

I am also a survivor of childhood sexual abuse, having been sexually assaulted by a family member for many years of my childhood. I understand the pain, emotions, stigmatization, and fear these victims feel in coming forward and telling their story.

Nova Scotia needs to go further in breaking these groups, substantially improving IPV interdiction and supporting abuse victims properly.

### **MY VISION:**

- Transition to a Government focused on trauma-informed decision-making for victims;
- Create an advisory group of survivors to assist and support the Government in areas of IPV and GBV decision-making;
- Review if a provincial working group at the Premier level to coordinate justice efforts, including police forces, to address this crisis;
- Create Nova Scotia's first provincial strategy focused on anti-trafficking, IPV and GBV. No plan exists; this leads to fragmentation and inefficiencies in key areas;
- Establish structured long-term core funding indexed to inflation for IPV, GBV, and anti trafficking programs, support, and reintegration methods;

- Dedicate an allocation of non-market transitional housing units for those leaving IPV and GBV;
- Allocate funding for training of support staff focused on trauma-informed interventions and supports;
- Conduct a review of professions where identification of trafficking victims could be high, and the feasibility of awareness training for these professions;
- Create and implement school-based education, relevant to school grades, about consent, IPV, and GBV;
- Work with Federal partners engaged in this issue and ensure efficient information flows to provincial partners;
- Work with non-profits and connected organizations focused on trafficking interdictions, support, or early intervention programs and youth mentorship;
- Allocate funding for police forces within the province to receive specialized training in trafficking awareness;
- Review TESS and identify areas where Nova Scotia can become a leader within this network; and
- Support PPS and Justice Department needs and identify areas where support can be enhanced.

# **A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Nova Scotia – Modernizing the Province to the World We Live In.**

## **FACTS FIRST:**

### **TIM HOUSTON’S PROMISES:**

- Expand high-speed internet access across Nova Scotia;
- Update government digital-service delivery practices;
- Increase accountability and transparency;
- Modernize education and curriculum;

### **TIM HOUSTON’S FAILURES:**

- Abandoned strong digital democratic governance;
- Concerns over transparency and oversight for the implementation of high-speed internet;
- No education or curriculum modernization to reflect our current world;
- No digital awareness and education for minors;
- Voted down a motion to create a “child and youth advocate”;
- Uneven application, digital access has improved, but transparency and social policy modernization are nonexistent; and
- All improvements are surface-level; no deeper reforms and modernization efforts exist.

Modernizing Nova Scotia for the 21st century is essential to ensure the province remains competitive, resilient, and capable of meeting the evolving needs of its citizens. In a world increasingly driven by digital technology, access to robust infrastructure, efficient government services, and secure digital systems is no longer optional—it is foundational to economic growth, social equity, and public trust. A modernized Nova Scotia can leverage technology to improve education, healthcare, and public services, while fostering innovation and creating opportunities for both urban and rural communities.

A critical aspect of this modernization is digital sovereignty—the ability to maintain control over Nova Scotia’s data and information systems. Personal Identifiable Information (PII) of residents, including health records, financial data, and sensitive

personal details, must be stored and processed in secure local servers to safeguard privacy and prevent exploitation by foreign entities or commercial actors. Ensuring local control over digital infrastructure not only protects individual rights but also strengthens government accountability and resilience against cyber threats, making the province more secure and self-reliant in the digital age.

Equally urgent is the protection of minors and young adults from digital harms, which have escalated dramatically in recent years. Exposure to extreme pornography, nihilistic or violent extremism, cyberbullying, online harassment, and other forms of psychological and social harm disproportionately affects those under 25. These harms can influence mental health, educational outcomes, and social development, leaving lasting consequences if unaddressed. Nova Scotia must implement comprehensive policies, including digital literacy, monitoring, and preventive frameworks, to mitigate these risks and ensure that young people can engage safely in online spaces. Addressing these challenges is not only a moral imperative but also a necessary component of truly modern, forward-looking governance.

#### **MY VISION:**

- Create a strategy for Nova Scotia specific to digital modernization, focused on moving Nova Scotia forward and addressing serious digital concerns;
- Move Nova Scotia towards digital sovereignty, including passing legislation that all data of Nova Scotians must be held and maintained in Nova Scotia, with no data on foreign infrastructure or under foreign law;
- Work with the AI Minister to address and discuss areas with Nova Scotia can become a leader in AI for Canada;
- Revise and modernize the provincial curriculum, with teacher input, to reflect the digital world we live in, Canadian studies, and open discussion aspects for high schools;
- Create a youth committee to discuss and provide input into potential legislation for the government for matters that impact Nova Scotia youth and young adults;
- Identify non-profit groups focused on working with minors and young adults to create partnerships focused on supporting these individuals;
- Review global examples of social media policies, and implement a solution unique to Nova Scotia;

- Review the evidence and science of porn on young adults and minors, and implement robust legislation to address this if need be;
- Create a Centre Of Excellence in Nova Scotia with national and international partners focused on the identification, research, analysis, and countering of extreme digital harms such as sextortion, The Coms, and more;
- Provide funding for educators, post-secondary staff, and sports staff to attend training in identifying red flags for youth and young adults in distress or under coercion; and
- Create parental awareness campaigns, literature, and resources, and training to allow parents to become informed on potential warning signs if their children are being exploited and options and avenues available.

## **A BETTER NOVA SCOTIA FOR ALL NOVA SCOTIANS**

Since taking office, Tim Houston's government has repeatedly failed to deliver on the promises made to Nova Scotians. Housing affordability has worsened under his leadership, with rising homelessness, skyrocketing rents, and inadequate support for non-market and social housing initiatives. Health care has deteriorated, with paramedics overworked, emergency rooms overcrowded, and mental health supports nowhere to be seen. Infrastructure projects lag, rural communities are neglected, and essential public services have been underfunded, leaving citizens to shoulder the consequences of a government more focused on optics than meaningful action.

The Houston government has also undermined transparency and accountability, making it harder for Nova Scotians to access information about public spending, policy decisions, and government performance. Programs meant to support students, families, and marginalized communities have been insufficient, poorly executed, or abandoned entirely. Economic policies have favoured a narrow circle of well-connected interests, while the majority of Nova Scotians struggle with stagnant wages, high cost of living, and declining opportunities. Across every major sector—housing, health care, education, and infrastructure—the pattern is clear: neglect, mismanagement, and broken promises.

Perhaps most damaging is the erosion of hope. Young people face limited prospects, rural towns are shrinking, and families feel abandoned by a government that has prioritized political gains over the well-being of its citizens. Tim Houston's approach has left Nova Scotia without a coherent vision for the future, with growing inequality, frustration, and despair filling the void. Citizens no longer see a government capable of uniting the province or tackling its most pressing challenges.

A Nova Scotia Liberal government under Dustin Rekunyk will bring hope and action back to the province. By prioritizing affordable housing, strengthening healthcare, investing in affordability, and tackling serious provincial problems, Liberals will ensure that government works for all Nova Scotians—not just a privileged few. We will rebuild communities, expand opportunities for young people, and create a future where Nova Scotia thrives, guided by fairness, competence, and a commitment to leaving no one behind. Together, we can restore trust, hope, and a bright future for every Nova Scotian.

Let's drive change, focused on building a Better Nova Scotia