



September 14, 2026

Dear Minister Thompson,

We keep hearing that healthcare in this province is getting better, but Nova Scotians are telling us that they aren't seeing the results. Emergency departments are closed more frequently, and many people are waiting longer for the care they need.

I'm writing today to share two pieces of legislation our caucus will introduce in the coming days that we believe would help. These two bills aim to increase transparency, and to give Nova Scotians non-partisan information about what decisions are being made about the healthcare system and why those decisions are being made. I hope you will review this legislation and give it full consideration.

When this government was elected in 2021 on a promise to fix healthcare, members of the Nova Scotia Health board of governance were removed almost immediately. They were replaced with a board administrator who worked from Ontario and an interim CEO who had no healthcare experience and deep ties to the Progressive Conservative Party. Since then, billions of dollars have been spent without oversight, and Nova Scotians are still having challenges accessing basic care. This needs to change. Nova Scotians need a clearer view on what decisions are being made on their behalf.

At this point, Nova Scotia Health has been without a board for five years. Instead of having a robust board made up of people who understand the problems facing Nova Scotians throughout the province, the Premier has handpicked a select few people to make decisions about the province's healthcare system behind closed doors. Naturally, this process raises serious concerns from Nova Scotians. In an effort to remedy this, we're presenting the *Healthcare Accountability Act* which requires you to reappoint a full 13-member governance board. Moving forward, any dismissal of a health board must be followed by the appointment of a new board within one year.

Nova Scotians have grave concerns about unpredictable access to emergency care. Emergency room wait times have increased nearly 40 per cent since 2021, and last year emergency departments in Lunenburg, Shelburne, Middleton, and Glace Bay were closed more often than they were open.

The *Action Plan on Access to Emergency Care Act* requires you to hold at least two public meetings in each of the province's healthcare zones where members of the public can share their experiences and concerns. You would then be required to release an Action Plan to improve predictability and timeliness for Nova Scotians accessing emergency care. The Act also requires you to publish annual progress reports to allow Nova Scotians to track what the government is doing to improve their access to emergency care on an on-going basis.

I hope we can work together to improve access to healthcare for Nova Scotians. On behalf of all Nova Scotians, we ask you to please support these important initiatives. People need to have confidence in how decisions are being made, a clear understanding of how the government is going to change the trend of emergency room closures and wait-times, and up-to-date progress reports about what is working and what isn't as your government works to address the crisis in emergency care facing communities across the province.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Claudia Chender".

Claudia Chender
Leader, Nova Scotia New Democrats

NOVA SCOTIA NDP CAUCUS

5151 George Street Suite 1401 | Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1M5

P: (902) 424 4134 | 1 888 247 0448. | **E:** ndpcaucus@novascotia.ca