



Office of the Premier
7th Floor, One Government Place
1700 Granville Street
Halifax, NS, B3J 1X5

October 19th, 2026

Dear Premier Houston,

Last week, I wrote to you about my deep concerns regarding your government's recent actions opening the door to higher power bills for Nova Scotians.

That includes your decision to pave the way for a \$1 billion dollar ratepayer bailout of Nova Scotia Power, and recent embrace of hyperscale AI data centre development.

On June 18th, you told CBC that Data Centres "were not a today thing" and that any discussion was "so far out in the future."

It now appears that discussions were happening even when you told Nova Scotians there was none.

Nova Scotians are rightly concerned about the data centre announcement, which was developed behind closed doors with little to no public consultation. What's worse, journalists who were present at the announcement were told they were trespassing and not allowed to ask you tough questions.

But tough questions about this project must be asked.

Nova Scotians are worried about the track record of hyperscale AI data centre developments. Data centres have a well-documented history driving up power bills, consuming far too much fresh water, and harming local communities. For example:

- If [data centres were a country](#), they would be the 11th largest consumer of electricity in the world, behind France. By 2030, data centres globally will rise to 6th place, consuming 945 terawatt-hours of electricity, which is more than the energy use of 1.3 billion people.
- One [study estimated](#) that in 2023, US data centres consumed 66 billion litres of water just for cooling, and by 2028 the water use of hyperscale data centres alone will rise to up to 124 billion litres of water.

This 420-megawatt data centre development would consume roughly one-fifth of the current electricity supply on Nova Scotia's power grid.

Your government has also already granted Everwind, the company behind the development, a 30-year permit to consume 10 million litres of water per day, or 110 billion litres in total. Concerningly, this is far greater than the amount of water the data centre developer is promising to consume.

What is most alarming is that you seem to believe that non-binding federal guidelines endorsed by the AI industry itself and expectations you laid out in a social media post constitute a valid approach to ensure that data centres remain accountable to the people of Nova Scotia.

Non-binding guidelines are not laws. This project needs to be regulated in the legislature, not on Facebook.

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Nova Scotians are being asked to trust your word, when you have repeatedly demonstrated that you don't keep the promises you make.

This is why we are calling for an emergency sitting of the Legislature to debate this generational policy decision by your government.

You can take the opportunity to be honest with Nova Scotians about your reversal, and to engage in debate.

If you really believe this is good for our province, then you can also introduce legislation to protect our power bills and our water, and to put rules in place before Nova Scotians are left paying the price.

Sincerely,

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

Claudia Chender
Leader, Nova Scotia New Democrats