



Premier of Nova Scotia
One Government Place
1713 Barrington Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 1X5

June 3, 2026

Dear Premier Houston,

I am alarmed to hear about five libraries closing thanks to your government's cruel budget cuts and chronic underfunding. These closures mean job losses in rural communities and fewer supports for Nova Scotians across the province.

Public libraries are some of the few accessible, trusted, and welcoming public spaces where people can get help navigating everyday life. At a time when the cost of living is rising and more young people are struggling with unemployment, public libraries are needed now more than ever.

Libraries are essential infrastructure. Beyond books and information services, they are a lifeline for residents who do not have reliable internet, transportation, or nearby government offices. They provide access to computers, Wi-Fi, printing, application forms, job postings, educational resources, and connection with public services. They provide help and are a safe space for victims of gender-based violence. They also reduce social isolation by offering programming for children, young parents, seniors, newcomers, job seekers, and families, while serving as everyday community hubs.

Since your government was elected, provincial funding to public libraries has been frozen while inflation has dramatically increased. Libraries have been raising the alarm and warned that this lack of funding could lead to closures, yet you failed to take action. This chronic underfunding is devastating to rural communities, where libraries receive 71 per cent of their funding from the province. As a result of your decisions, five communities are losing their libraries in Hantsport, Kentville, Lawrencetown, Middleton and Port Williams.

We are also deeply concerned about what we've heard from libraries across the rest of the province. The funding shortfall puts their futures in jeopardy too. Staff turnover is reaching crisis levels because staff are being paid far less than library staff in other provinces. Librarians are having their hours cut because provincial funding isn't even keeping up with minimum wage increases.

Your government struck a review panel to examine a fix to the province's funding framework for public libraries. The review was clear: the status quo approach to funding is not an option. Instead of implementing its recommendations, your government has not committed to continuing the interim bridge funding meant to be in place while this longer-term fix was being contemplated. Libraries should not have to continuously apply for the funding they need to stay open.

These library closures are not inevitable; they are the result of your government's choices. We urge you to immediately increase library funding in the province, to save these libraries and secure the future of public libraries across the province.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Leblanc", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Susan Leblanc
NDP Critic for Communities Culture Tourism and Heritage
MLA, Dartmouth North