



Office of the Premier
One Government Place
1713 Barrington Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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August 25, 2026

Dear Premier Houston,

Now that you have returned to the province, I'm writing to ask you for a fulsome response to the discovery of misogynistic songs written by Minister Marco MacLeod. You have yet to officially comment or answer questions from the media about Minister MacLeod's actions.

A Minister of the Crown normalizing language and attitudes that denigrate women, in a province with an epidemic of gender based violence, is understandably concerning to Nova Scotians. This is more impactful because this isn't the first time a member of your Cabinet has done this. Your former Justice Minister openly refuted a key finding in the Mass Casualty Commission report, that "gender-based, intimate partner, and family violence is an epidemic." In the last budget, your government cut funding for domestic violence courts. On your watch there continues to be a severe lack of critical, operational funding for gender based violence organizations. Women remain underserved in healthcare and housing, with your government continuing to ignore calls for a women's health strategy calling it a "wedge issue." In short, your government's record is not good.

It's not just opposition parties who are raising concerns about this most recent incident. Adsum, an organisation that serves women and gender diverse Nova Scotians, deemed Minister MacLeod's actions so harmful that they have called for his resignation. Be the Peace has made clear that an apology is insufficient and that Nova Scotians deserve to know what concrete steps are being taken. Yet, last week when questioned by media, Minister MacLeod couldn't explain any steps he is taking to educate himself about misogyny, to actively repair the harm he has caused in community, or to rebuild the trust with front-line organisations dedicated to keeping Nova Scotians safe.

Apologies without action do little to help improve the lives of women, girls and gender diverse people in our province. All Nova Scotians have to be able to trust that their elected representatives understand and are doing everything they can to address the marginalization and violence they continue to face.

Women across the province are wondering why they are continually expected to accept this behaviour from men in positions of power. They want to know: if Minister MacLeod will remain in your cabinet, if you still have confidence in his judgement, and what steps are being taken to address the troubling pattern from your government of failing to take seriously issues that disproportionately affect women?

Nova Scotian families who have been impacted by violence and misogyny deserve a response.

Sincerely,

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

Claudia Chender
Leader, Nova Scotia New Democrats
MLA, Dartmouth South

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