

Candace L. Thomas, K.C.
Deputy Minister and Deputy Attorney General

May 17, 2024

Michelle M. Kelly, K.C.
Chair, Atlantic Advisory Committee, The Advocates' Society
2700-250 Yonge Street
Toronto, ON, M5B 2L7

Dear Michelle M. Kelly, K.C.:

Re: Funding for Justice in Budget 2024-2025

Thank you for your letter, dated April 11, 2024, to former Minister Johns and Minister MacMaster regarding funding allocated to the justice system in Nova Scotia's 2024-25 budget. As you may know, Minister Adams has recently transitioned into the role of Attorney General and Minister of Justice.

Government appreciates the diverse perspectives championed by the Advocates' Society, and the role your organization plays in enhancing our legal landscape.


Nova Scotia recognizes that investing in the long-term sustainability of our justice system is more important than ever, and we are actively working to reduce backlogs and delays in our courts, including by increasing resources for the Public Prosecution Service, and by establishing the province's first bail court. To support an increase in casework, Nova Scotia Legal Aid (NSLA) will receive additional annual funding of \$227,000 to hire a new staff lawyer and court support worker in the 2024-2025 budget.

In addition, I am pleased to share that the provincial government has committed to providing NSLA with an additional \$3.98 million this fiscal year, and ongoing annual funding of \$5.6 million starting next year to increase the compensation for certificate lawyers. In addition to increasing tariff rates, the new funding also recognizes the increased complexities of some matters by raising the maximum number of hours that may be billed. It is anticipated that the increase will help attract and retain certificate lawyers, who are vital to the work performed by NSLA, and will help increase access to justice for Nova Scotians.

An appropriately resourced legal aid program is essential to ensuring all Nova Scotians have equitable access to justice, and we continue to work with the Federal Government, and NSLA itself, to ensure that NSLA can meet the increasing demand for its services.

Thank you for your advocacy on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Candace L. Thomas, K.C.
Deputy Minister of Justice
and Deputy Attorney General

cc: The Honourable Barbara Adams, Minister of Justice and Attorney General
The Honourable Allan MacMaster, Minister of Finance and Treasury Board