



The Advocates' Society La Société des plaideurs

March 31, 2023

VIA EMAIL

The Honourable Michael J. Wood
Chief Justice of Nova Scotia
Co-Chair, Nova Scotia Courts Digital Task Force
Nova Scotia Court of Appeal
The Law Courts Building
1815 Upper Water Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1S7

Candace L. Thomas, K.C.
Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General of Nova Scotia
Co-Chair, Nova Scotia Courts Digital Task Force
Department of Justice
1690 Hollis Street, P.O. Box 7
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2L6

Dear Chief Justice and Deputy Minister:

RE: Nova Scotia Courts Digital Task Force Request for Feedback

The Advocates' Society writes to you in your capacity as co-chairs of the Nova Scotia Courts Digital Task Force ("Task Force"), in response to the Task Force's survey of court users regarding the digital transformation of the court system.

Established in 1963, The Advocates' Society is a not-for-profit organization representing approximately 5,500 diverse lawyers and students across the country—unified in their calling as advocates. As the leading national association of litigation counsel in Canada, The Advocates' Society and its members are dedicated to promoting a fair and accessible system of justice. A core part of our mission is to provide policymakers with the views of legal advocates on matters that affect access to justice, the administration of justice, the practice of law by advocates, and equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in the justice system and legal profession.

The Advocates' Society applauds the establishment of the Task Force and the collaboration and coordination it represents between the Nova Scotia judiciary, the Department of Justice, and the Bar. We strongly believe that it is crucial for the justice system to capitalize upon the hard-earned lessons and advancements prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We encourage the constituencies represented on the Task Force to continue to commit the necessary resources, monetary and otherwise, for the thoughtful integration of technology into the administration of justice. We particularly encourage the Task Force to pursue e-filing solutions with all possible alacrity, with concomitant investments in technology

for courtrooms to ensure courts can handle digital documentary evidence seamlessly at in-person hearings.

We take this opportunity to assure you that the bar has a strong appetite for the modernization of the justice system, with a view to improving access to justice for residents of this province. The Advocates' Society would be pleased to consult further with the Task Force and to provide you with specific feedback from advocates on particular initiatives the Task Force is pursuing. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me by telephone at 902-491-4465 or by email at mkelly@coxandpalmer.com.

Please also be advised that The Advocates' Society has promoted the Task Force's survey to our Nova Scotia members via social media, to help ensure the Task Force receives a meaningful number of responses to the survey from a variety of stakeholders.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "MKelly", is positioned above the typed name.

Michelle M. Kelly, K.C.
Chair, Atlantic Advisory Committee

CC: Peter W. Kryworuk, President, The Advocates' Society
Vicki White, Chief Executive Officer, The Advocates' Society