



October 7, 2014

Honourable Roger Luc Melanson
Minister of Finance
P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, New Brunswick
E3B 5H1

Dear Colleague,

On September 22, 2014, the people of New Brunswick entrusted us with the mandate of governing our great province. We worked hard to earn this trust, and we will have to work even harder to keep it. Our platform, *Moving New Brunswick Forward*, has set the foundation for a better future. We have been given four years to shape the future of New Brunswick and we need to approach each day with a strong sense of purpose. Our ultimate goal is to work with New Brunswickers to provide clear and focused leadership on job creation, balancing our finances and making life more affordable for families.

I am pleased to appoint you Minister of Finance. I congratulate you and want to remind you of the extraordinary opportunity you have been given to serve your province both as an MLA and in this Ministerial capacity. As you continue your duties as a Minister, the role of representing your constituents must remain a priority.

In your capacity as Minister, you are responsible for ensuring our platform commitments associated with your portfolio are implemented. The commitments for which you are responsible are identified in the attachment to this letter.

As Minister of Finance, you will be the Minister responsible for NB Liquor, the New Brunswick Investment Management Corporation, the New Brunswick Lotteries and Gaming Corporation, and the Municipal Finance Corporation. You are also responsible for the *Statistics Act*.

In addition to your responsibilities, you will be the Chair of Board of Management. Board of Management analyses and coordinates financial policies and management practices of government and encourages the efficient and effective use of financial and human resources.

The Office of the Premier plays a critical role in moving the government agenda forward, coordinating activities, monitoring performance and managing critical issues. We work as a team and, as such, you are expected to:

- work collaboratively on major policy initiatives and communication issues;
- consult on decisions regarding the staffing of positions and Ministerial appointments;
- be informed on the general and departmental legislative agenda;
- demonstrate enhanced decorum in the Legislative Assembly;
- be responsive to the needs of your caucus colleagues;
- seek approval on all out-of-province travel;
- be fiscally prudent and transparent in your duties; and
- publish expense reports online in a timely and transparent manner.

Members of the Executive Council are reminded of the roles and responsibilities and standards of ethics that they are expected to uphold. These are outlined in greater detail in the Minister's Handbook. As well, members of the Executive Council are to adhere to the conflict of interest provisions. It is not enough to avoid conflicts of interest; you must also be diligent in avoiding the perceptions of such.

As we begin to build our working relationship with the public service, I expect you to be mindful of the professionalism and unwavering commitment of our public servants. We are committed to work particularly hard to rebuild trust and respect between the political arm of government and the professional civil service.

As a Minister responsible for a department of government, you are expected to strive to develop a professional, respectful and trusting relationship with the Deputy Minister of your department. The Minister and the Deputy Minister have interrelated but distinct roles and responsibilities in relation to the organization. A Minister's authority and responsibilities are defined in the various pieces of legislation related to his or her portfolio. Ministers are individually responsible, answerable and accountable to the Legislature for those responsibilities. In addition to these enabling statutes, there are unwritten conventions and precedents governing the ways in which Ministers fulfill their responsibilities and account for their actions in exercising their statutory authority.

The Deputy Minister is the principal source of support for a Minister in fulfilling his or her collective and individual responsibilities. The Deputy Minister is responsible for effectively managing the department, carrying out responsibilities delegated by the Minister as well as obligations conferred by the *Civil Service Act* in relation to staffing and delegation. The greatest benefit will derive to the organization if the Minister and Deputy Minister conduct their work with a high level of consultation and cooperation. While the Deputy Minister has various responsibilities, he or she is ultimately accountable to the Premier, through the Clerk of the Executive Council, for upholding the duly approved policies of government and providing support to the Minister in a way that is consistent with the agenda and direction of government as a whole.

As a Minister of the Crown, your first priority will be to support the Government agenda. You are also expected to work in cooperation with the Government House Leader in order to specifically support the legislative agenda of Government including daily attendance in Question Period and during debates. You have the responsibility to work in a collegial fashion with your Cabinet colleagues in order to move our agenda forward together. In the spirit of Cabinet collegiality, it is important to remember that decisions to commit government to action beyond what is in the platform are made by all, not by individual Ministers. Finally, you are to be supportive of all caucus colleagues and be attentive to their needs from your department.

As I mentioned when I gave you your assignment, I will be assessing the performance of all Ministers in 18 to 24 months' time. We have an incredibly strong caucus and there will be opportunities to refresh our cabinet throughout our mandate.

We have been entrusted with an important and rare duty. I expect that from day one, we will govern fairly and wisely. This commitment to excellence must permeate all that we do. We serve our Province through each action and each decision we take. I am asking you to approach your duties with the greatest diligence, the strongest sense of purpose and the clearest commitment to put the interests of New Brunswickers first in all that we do.

Finally, I want to share some advice that I hope you will find as helpful as I have: work hard, be disciplined and take responsibility for everything you do. I have found that when I follow these three principles, I have always been proud of my actions.

Sincerely,

Hon. Brian Gallant
Premier of New Brunswick

Enclosure: Platform Commitments

cc: Clerk of the Executive Council and Secretary to Cabinet
Deputy Minister of Finance

**Attachment
Platform Commitments
Finance**

Government is committed to the following initiatives in ***Moving New Brunswick Forward***. It is the expectation that the Minister of Finance take the lead on the following commitments.

*To provide New Brunswickers with **more jobs**, we are committed to:*

- Giving our small businesses a competitive advantage by lowering the small business corporate income tax rate to 2.5%, the lowest rate east of Manitoba.
- Enabling small businesses to get better access to needed capital investments by increasing the Small Business Investor Tax Credit to 50% from 30%.
- Developing a multi-year infrastructure spending plan to ensure predictability for the construction industry and to prevent irresponsible spending in election years.
- Working with the federal government to try to get New Brunswick its fair share: Revisiting changes to federal health and social transfers ensuring they recognize the distinct nature of particular provinces, rather than the one-size-fits-all approach of per capita funding.



*To ensure New Brunswick is the **best place to raise a family**, we are committed to:*

- Providing tax breaks and grants to allow seniors or their families to renovate their homes to stay independent longer.
- Better policing of the illegal sale of contraband tobacco products and smuggling of tobacco and alcohol from other jurisdictions.
- Increasing taxes on the richest one percent of New Brunswickers to levels comparable to neighbouring provinces.
- Canceling the property tax break for businesses given by the past government.
- Amending the Financial Administration Act to eliminate cabinet's power to secretly grant a "special pension" to political friends.



*To create **smarter government**, we are committed to:*

- Publishing quarterly financial statements on fixed dates, ensuring that the public can see how their money is being spent in a predictable and honest way.
- Inviting civil servants and retirees who had pension reforms imposed upon them back to the negotiation table for an open, fair and transparent dialogue.

