

December 9 2008

Honourable Shawn Graham
Premier of New Brunswick
P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

Dear Premier Graham:

On behalf of the Saint John Board of Trade members, I would like to thank you for your commitment to improving the level of Post-Secondary Education in New Brunswick. Your pledge in last week's Closure of the Throne Speech Debate (December 5) of approximately \$45 million for the facilities at the New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) in Saint John was a welcome announcement in these times of fiscal belt-tightening. With an expected shortage in skilled workforce, investing in this infrastructure, despite tough economic times displays your government's long-term vision and discipline to make New Brunswick self-sufficient by 2026.

The upgrading and expansion of NBCC in Saint John is an issue the Board of Trade has supported for many years, including a presentation made to representatives of the Provincial Government in March 2000. The buildings, dating back to the sixties and seventies are old and require upgrading and expansion to accommodate the programs and class sizes needed to support the workforce demands of local businesses. This is an even more pressing an issue today with the current and proposed mega-projects, than it was 8 years ago when the presentation was made. This infusion of funds for upgrading and expansion of the college's campus facilities will provide the 'critical mass' of technical and human resources to ensure quality training opportunities at affordable prices for students.

I would personally like to thank you and Minister Arseneault of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour for working to make this a reality. I would also like to specially thank Minister Doherty, who started this process of funding while he was responsible for Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour.

The Board of Trade has seen several of its long-standing key priorities met by the Provincial Government over the past few years including the One-Mile Highway Interchange;

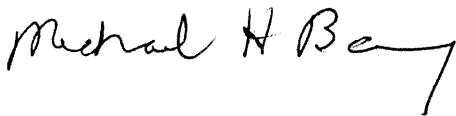
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commitment of funds for the Twinning of Route 1 from Saint John to St. Stephen; the establishment of the Provincial Anglophone Medical School at the University of New Brunswick, Saint John Campus; the expansion of the Saint John Regional Hospital; and most recently the funding for the upgrading and expansion of NBCC in Saint John. All of these accomplishments would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the MLAs in the Greater Saint John area.

It is encouraging and has been fruitful to work in consultation with your MLAs in Greater Saint John. They have contributed to ensure that our young people, the workforce of tomorrow, do not have to leave the Province in order to obtain an education and establish a career. We look forward to further announcements alluded to in last week's Speech, specifically with respect to the Provincial Anglophone Medical School and Saint John Regional hospital infrastructure.

In closing, we appreciate the commitment you and your colleagues have displayed for the future of this Province and its citizens. The Saint John Board of Trade would like to thank you and your Government for the time and dedication you have given to ensuring the training of skilled workers in the Province of New Brunswick to strengthen our growth, its citizens, and its businesses.

Sincerely,



Dr. Michael Barry
Chair



CC: Honourable Donald Arseneault, Minister Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour
Honourable Edward Doherty, Minister Supply and Services
Honourable Jack Keir, Minister Energy
Honourable Stuart Jamieson, Minister Tourism and Parks
Honourable Mary Schryer, Minister Social Development
Honourable Roly McIntyre, MLA Saint John East
Mr. Abel LeBlanc, MLA Saint John Lancaster
Editor, Telegraph Journal