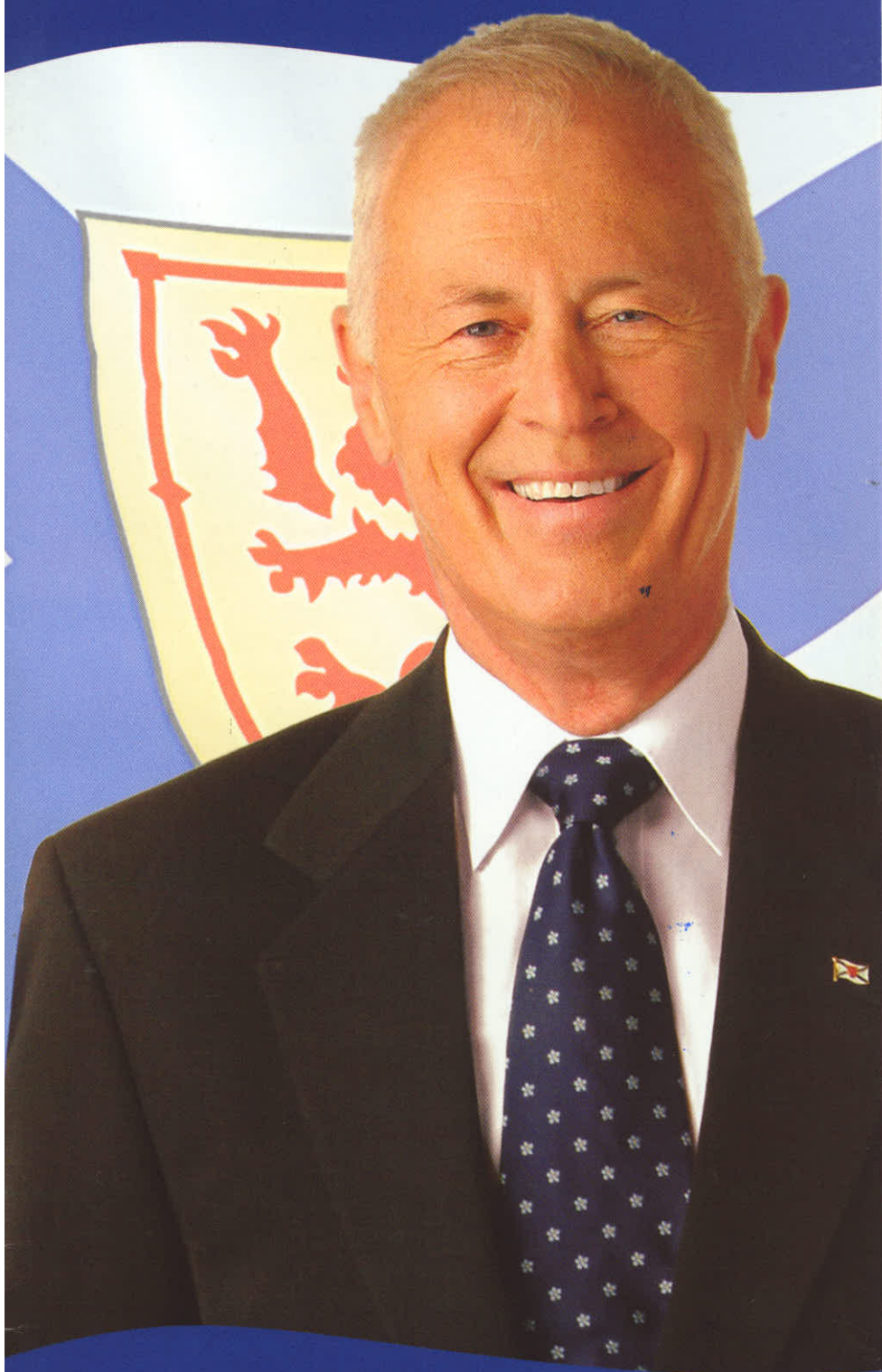


2003

John Hamm's  
**Blueprint**  
for building a better  
**Nova Scotia**

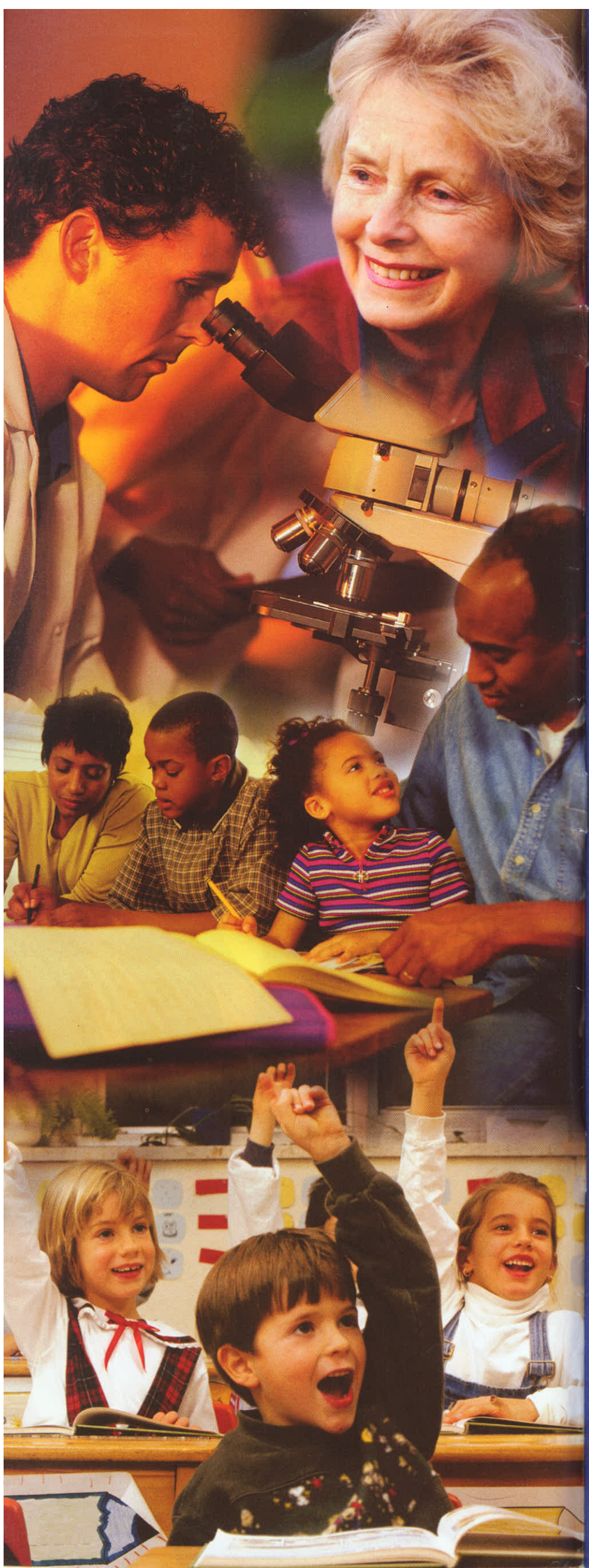


**PC**

NOVA SCOTIA

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# **a Message**

## **from Premier**

# **John Hamm**

I've lived in Nova Scotia all my life. It is a great place to live, work and raise a family. In fact, it's the best province, in the best country in the world. We have a proud history, spectacular scenery, a vibrant culture, and smart, capable, caring people.

Since becoming Premier, I've traveled from one end of the province to the other many times, and I know that our province's greatest strength is its people. I also know, that if we work hard together, we can become so much more than we already are.

We can become a national leader in promoting good health. We can do what it takes to ensure our children and their grandchildren get an education second to no one, and the chance for a good job right here at home. We can show the world that business and industry can comfortably co-exist within a beautiful, clean environment. And we can protect our values and our enviable quality of life despite the pressures of a modern, hectic world.

In 1999, we were the only party to lay out a detailed plan to begin addressing these and other priorities. We took our job seriously and kept our word to Nova Scotians.

As a government we've worked hard to put in place the fiscal, economic and social conditions to help move Nova Scotia forward. We've worked hard to build a modern, diverse economy and to protect what Nova Scotians value.

Today our financial situation has never been more secure, our economy more strong, our prospects for a better future for our children more bright. Today, the evidence is clear our plan is working and that we are on the right course.

But there's still a lot more to do.

That is why, just as we did in 1999, we are once again, presenting Nova Scotians with a detailed four-year plan. More than just a party platform or a statement of broad policy intentions, it is a comprehensive blueprint for building a better future for you and your children right here in Nova Scotia.



And just as we stuck to our first four-year plan, we will stick to the four-year plan we are putting before you now. Because I believe, and my government believes, that Nova Scotians deserve to see the full picture. We also believe that any party that is serious about governing, must be serious about looking ahead and planning, not just for election day, but for the foreseeable future.

That is what this document does.

It is a plan, a full plan, that will build on the significant progress already underway. It is a plan that reaffirms our commitment to faster access to better health care, a better education for your child, a more competitive economy and more jobs through fiscal stability and lower taxes.

It's not a new plan, but rather the next steps in a plan that's already working.

Thank You

*John Hammon*





## Blueprint Highlights

John Hamm and his government know that in order to increase investment in our province, to create more jobs for skilled Nova Scotians and to generate the revenues needed to pay for vital services in future, you need to take a balanced approach.

This plan continues to look at all aspects of life in Nova Scotia, and find ways to make it better. It focuses on keeping a balanced budget, making our economy more competitive and creating new jobs through lower taxes. It focuses on improving access to quality health care and on helping Nova Scotians lead healthier live. It focuses on giving our children the best education possible with good opportunities to live and work right here at home. And it focuses on the next steps in our 6 step plan for ensuring Nova Scotians have fair and affordable care insurance.

### **Building Greater Prosperity**

A strong economy is connected to all other aspects of life. Our approach is to build the right climate for private sector investment and growth. That means balancing the budget, lowering taxes and ensuring Nova Scotians have the education, skills and training to meet the jobs of the future. It also means improving our transportation infrastructure and working closely with business, industry and labour to achieve maximum benefit from our many natural advantages.

#### **Our goals:**

- To help the province create at least 30,000 new jobs over the next four years.
- To continue to grow our economy above the national average.

#### **As part of our four-year plan, John Hamm's government will:**

- ☐ Guarantee the 10% payroll tax deduction takes effect Jan. 1, 2004.

#### **Annual Personal Income Tax Savings**

	Current Taxes Paid	Taxes After Reduction	Savings Estimated
Single Earner \$26,000	\$1,675	\$1,507	\$168
Family of four one earner \$40,000	\$2,888	\$2,612	\$276
Family of four two earners \$65,000	\$4,833	\$4,356	\$477
Family of four two earners \$105,000	\$10,716	\$9,701	\$1,016

- ☐ Lower taxes for small business.
- ☐ New Small Business Division within Nova Scotia Business Inc.
- ☐ Increased highway improvement and rural road money.
- ☐ Ensure that Nova Scotia has the most competitive tax environment in Atlantic Canada.
- ☐ More e-government services and less red tape.
- ☐ New Nova Scotia Supplier Development Program.
- ☐ New Farm Growth Planning Program.



- ☐ New Community Development Strategy.
- ☐ Guaranteed multi-year funding commitment to Regional Development Authorities.

## **Better, Faster, Health Care**

Providing Nova Scotians with better and faster access to health care requires solid information, good planning, a cooperative approach and of course, the people and resources to make it happen. It also requires a greater focus on healthy living.

### **Our goals:**

- To provide financial stability to health care professionals and planners to they can implement long-term plans to improve patient care and access.
- To ensure every Nova Scotian has access to the medical professionals they need.
- To promote choices that lead to healthy lifestyles for Nova Scotians.

### **As part of our four-year plan, John Hamm's government will:**

#### ***Hospital Care***

- ☐ Provide guaranteed multi-year funding for front-line care.
- ☐ Train or recruit 350 more nurses, 100 more doctors and 88 medical laboratory technologists.
- ☐ Launch a new Wait List Information Service for doctors and their patients.
- ☐ Expand the number of Community Clinics and pilot specialized clinics.
- ☐ Provide a new Low Income Drug Assistance Plan for Diabetics.

#### ***Continuing Care***

- ☐ Assume the full cost of health care in nursing homes.
- ☐ End all asset calculations for placement in nursing homes.
- ☐ Expanded Palliative Care.
- ☐ More Nursing Home beds and Assisted Living options.

#### ***Health Promotion***

- ☐ Double Health Promotion funding.
- ☐ Expand number of community-based, mental health crisis-intervention services.
- ☐ Develop a comprehensive multi-year plan to reduce Chronic Disease rates.
- ☐ Provide a tax benefit for registering children and youth in sport/recreation.
- ☐ New School and Workplace Health Champions Award.
- ☐ Expand Good Parenting Programs through Family Resource Centres.
- ☐ Complete next steps in Active Kids Healthy Kids.
- ☐ Annual funding for Community Health Boards.



## ***Learning is Succeeding***

Education is the cornerstone of a strong economy and society. Our approach is to focus on the student, to put the basics first, provide our classrooms with more resources and be more accountable for results, from Primary to Grade 12, to post-secondary and beyond.

### **Our goals:**

- To improve the performance of Nova Scotia Students in national and international testing.
- To reduce the teacher to student ratio.
- To foster a culture of learning earlier in a child's life.
- To maximize opportunities for young people to live and work at home.

### **As part of our four-year plan, John Hamm's government will:**

#### ***Primary to Grade 12***

- ☐ Pilot new Ready to Learn free pre-school program for four-year olds.
- ☐ Additional class size reductions in the early years.
- ☐ Provide a \$1,000 increase in per student funding.
- ☐ Add one million new books, learning resources.
- ☐ Provide more support for struggling students.
- ☐ Establish a new Tuition Support Program for students with special needs.
- ☐ Expand the range of Advanced High School courses to include language arts, social sciences and the arts.
- ☐ Require all schools be assessed and graded on performance through a School Accreditation Program.

#### ***Post-secondary***

- ☐ Negotiate a multi-year funding agreements with universities to contain the cost of tuition
- ☐ Double the employment and repayment bonuses through NS Student Loan Program
- ☐ Provide additional multi-year funding to complete next steps in Community College Growth Plan
- ☐ Extend Nova Scotia's Research and Innovation Trust Fund
- ☐ Provide guaranteed multi-year funding for Nova Scotia's First School for Adult Learners.



## **Protecting what we Value**

Nova Scotians have a clear idea of what is important to them; the things that matter in their lives and the things worth protecting. We also believe in these values, including supporting our seniors and working families; protecting our environment and promoting our cultural diversity. We are equally committed to protecting consumers and keeping our communities safe.

### **Our goals:**

- To have safe, clean and healthy communities to live in.
- To ensure fairness and equal opportunity for all citizens.
- To support Nova Scotians in need improve their circumstances.

### **As part of our four-year plan, John Hamm's government will:**

#### *Seniors*

- ☐ Eliminate mandatory retirement within the Civil Service.
- ☐ Develop a new Falls Prevention Strategy.
- ☐ Increase the income ceilings for seniors to qualify for emergency home repairs.
- ☐ Provide new resources to support community-based, peer-support and volunteer senior's networks.
- ☐ Introduce a new strategy to address Elder Abuse.
- ☐ Establish a new Task Force on Aging.
- ☐ Eliminate car insurance rate discrimination against seniors.

#### *Families and Nova Scotians in Need*

- ☐ Guarantee multi-year funding to expand accessible buildings/transportation.
- ☐ Establish a wheelchair recycling demonstration program.
- ☐ Introduce Palliative Care Legislation.
- ☐ Eliminate license and registration fees for community-accessible transportation.
- ☐ Work with UNSM to cap annual increases in property assessments.
- ☐ More child care spaces.
- ☐ More Good Parenting programs through Family Resource Centres.

#### *Protecting the Environment*

- ☐ Introduce amendments to strengthen Environment Act and take the next steps in implementing Nova Scotia's first Green Plan.
- ☐ Proceed with the nomination of Eigg Mountain and Gully Lake, as protected spaces.
- ☐ Fund more clean water and sewer services.
- ☐ Negotiate more stewardship agreements with industry.
- ☐ Partner with stakeholders to acquire more coastal properties and wilderness areas for protection.
- ☐ Advance clean-up of Sydney tar ponds and Sysco sites.



### *Promoting Cultural Diversity*

- ☐ Appoint Nova Scotia's First Minister responsible for African-Nova Scotian Affairs.
- ☐ Implement the operational recommendations of the Blac report.
- ☐ Support an application to have Grand Pre and Joggins designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- ☐ Pursue a finalized framework to negotiate treaty-related issues with the Mi'Kmaq.

### *Consumers Protection / Insurance*

- ☐ Reduce automobile insurance by an average of at least 20 percent through a realistic 6-step plan:
  - ☐ Freeze on new rates increases from May 03 to January 04.
  - ☐ New restrictions on underwriting practices to prohibit discrimination based on age, sex, non-driving related matters, and previous coverage in Facility Association.
  - ☐ Requirement for a basic auto insurance package with a cap on minor injury claims and greater openness on the part of insurance companies.
  - ☐ Establish a new Automobile Insurance Review Panel to approve all insurance rates and appoint a new actuary to ensure fair underwriting practices.
  - ☐ Extend the consumer advocate position.
  - ☐ Work with other Atlantic Provinces to harmonize insurance legislation and regulations and assess the costs and benefits of a regional public insurance system.
- ☐ Allow for pre-Christmas Sunday Shopping this year and hold a plebiscite to determine public's view on year-round Sunday Shopping.

### *Safer Communities / Streets*

- ☐ Step up efforts to combat drinking and driving.
- ☐ Establish Province-wide Youth Court.
- ☐ Launch new Justice Enterprise Information Network.
- ☐ Increase support for Domestic Violence Case Coordination Program.

## **Order in the House**

Fiscal responsibility is key to ensuring Nova Scotia is an attractive place to invest. New investments create new jobs and new jobs mean more revenue to invest in Nova Scotia's priorities.

### **Our goals:**

- To improve Nova Scotia's credit rating.
- To increase private/public capital investment.

### **As part of our four-year plan, John Hamm's government will:**

- ☐ Deliver four more balanced budgets.
- ☐ Begin reducing the debt.
- ☐ Ensure value for money audits of third party spending.



## **A Plan that's Working**

In 1999, we were the only party to lay out a detailed plan to address Nova Scotia's long-neglected needs and to position Nova Scotia for a more prosperous future.

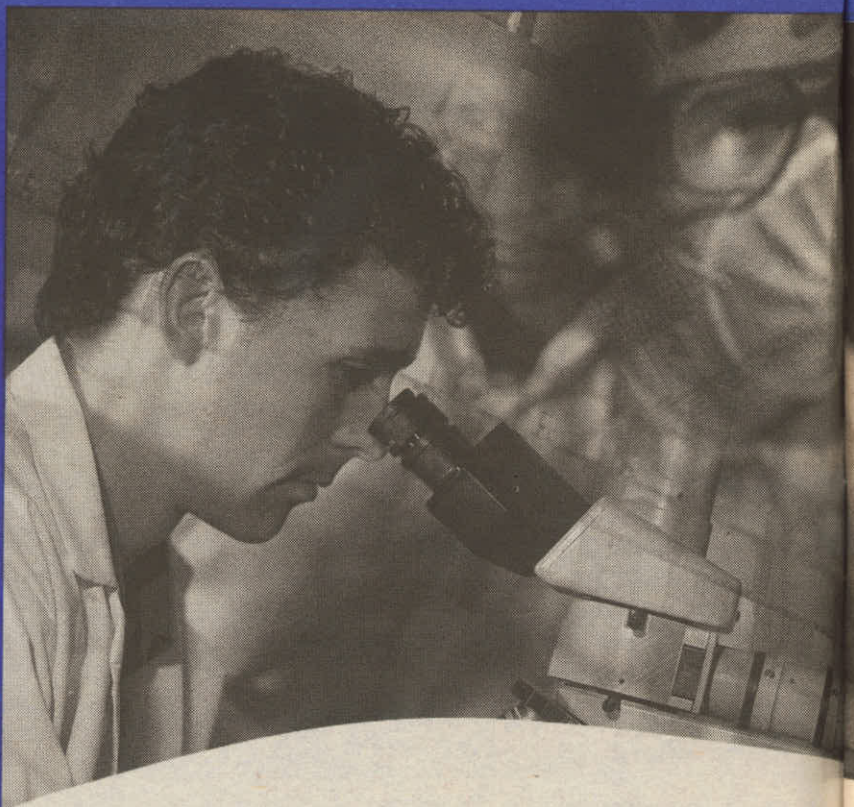
- ✓ We said we would balance the budget in year three. We did.
- ✓ We said we would lower your taxes in year four. We did.
- ✓ We said we would set realistic targets to reduce the debt. We did.
- ✓ We said we would hire more nurses and doctors. We did.
- ✓ We said we would involve communities in determining the future of health care and focus more on healthy living. We did.
- ✓ We said we would focus on learning the basics first and provide our students with more tools and resources to support student learning. We did.
- ✓ We said we would fix our sick schools and build new schools without P-3. We did.
- ✓ We said we would create more jobs. We did.
- ✓ We said we would begin rebuilding our roads, highways and bridges. We did.
- ✓ We said if Sysco couldn't be sold – it would be closed. It was.

John Hamm and his Progressive Conservative team said that they would take a balanced approach to government, measuring need against want, cost against benefit, and the future against the past. And they have. And Nova Scotia is all the better for it.

## **A Record to Support**

- ✓ Eliminated Nova Scotia's \$500 million deficit.
- ✓ More than 20,000 new jobs created (90 % full-time).
- ✓ 9,000 fewer Nova Scotians on welfare.
- ✓ Personal income levels increased by 10%.
- ✓ Personal income taxes reduced 10%.
- ✓ 3,500 Nova Scotians no longer pay provincial income tax.
- ✓ Nova Scotia's economic growth exceeds national average.
- ✓ More than 200 new doctors recruited.
- ✓ More than 110 new nurses recruited in last year alone.
- ✓ More than 720,000 new books introduced into classrooms.
- ✓ 19 new schools built or under construction.
- ✓ More than doubled funding for roads and highways.
- ✓ \$60 million more for universities.
- ✓ 1,000 new Community College seats opened up.
- ✓ \$1,000 increase in per student funding.
- ✓ 400 new subsidized day care spaces.
- ✓ Closed Sysco.
- ✓ Sold NSRL.
- ✓ Reduced the Debt-to GDP ratio from over 46.5 to 41.1 percent.





## **Building Greater Prosperity**

*"One of the main reasons I entered public life was I was disheartened by the number of young Nova Scotians who couldn't find work in their own province. I knew then, as I know now, that the best way to create jobs is for government to build the right climate for private sector investment and growth.*

*That is why in 1999, I laid out a detailed plan to put in place the fiscal, social and economic conditions that would create new opportunities for Nova Scotians. My plan talked about the need to end deficit spending and to lower taxes. It talked about the need to provide more and better skills and trades training, to fix our long-neglected roads and schools, and to more aggressively market Nova Scotia's many advantages to the world. My plan also talked about the need to work more closely with business, industry and labour in setting out a long-term economic growth plan for our province so that more Nova Scotians would be packing their bags, not to leave, but to come home.*

*We stuck to our plan. We built on our plan and I believe Nova Scotia is all the better for it." – John Hamm*

*"Our whole sector, through the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council, is proud to be a part of a program that will continue to build on the success demonstrated by small business operators throughout Nova Scotia."*

*Bernie O'Neill, Senior Vice President, Credit Union Central*



## Proven Leadership – the Record

Over the past four years, we have built a strong economy with lots of options and growing potential for Nova Scotia. In partnership with Nova Scotians, the John Hamm Government has:

- ✓ Achieved two back-to-back balanced budgets – for the first time in 40 years.
- ✓ Lowered personal and small business taxes.
- ✓ Launched Opportunities for Prosperity, Nova Scotia's first economic development strategy in a decade. Created in partnership with business and labour, this strategy identifies new approaches and partnerships to support Nova Scotia's long-term growth.
- ✓ Expanded opportunities to invest in Nova Scotia and to enhance business access to capital financing by extending the Equity Tax Credit to 2006.
- ✓ Created Nova Scotia Business Inc., a new arm's-length agency with business expertise to take politics out of economic development decisions and to ensure investment decisions are based on sound business analysis.
- ✓ Used community economic development investment funds to attract \$5 million in venture capital funding for Nova Scotia small businesses.
- ✓ Invested \$15 million in Nova Scotia's first Research and Innovation Trust Fund, supporting our universities and hospitals leverage additional federal and corporate funds to support research and innovation.
- ✓ Doubled the size of InNOVAcorp's Nova Scotia First Fund with an additional \$8 million investment. The Nova Scotia First Fund is used to help innovative ideas into commercial success stories.



- ✓ Established a new program to expand commercial lending to Nova Scotia small businesses, through Credit Union Central and the Nova Scotia Cooperative Council.
- ✓ Developed Seizing the Opportunity, a comprehensive energy strategy to ensure Nova Scotia receives maximum benefit from its resources.
- ✓ Put in place a common sense, market-driven natural gas distribution system that will see 20,000 Nova Scotians have access to this new energy source within six years.
- ✓ Convinced Ottawa to review the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Accord, which guaranteed that Nova Scotia would be the principal beneficiary of its offshore resources – a key demand of the province's Campaign for Fairness.
- ✓ Established the Nova Scotia Skills Agenda and created the Skills Partnership Forum to ensure Nova Scotians have the skills required to meet future job demands.
- ✓ Opened up 1,000 new community college seats, with a commitment to increase the number by another 2,500 seats.
- ✓ Created Nova Scotia's hugely successful First School for Adult Learning, providing older Nova Scotians with new opportunities to advance their education.
- ✓ Passed a new Apprenticeship Act and adopted a multi-year strategy to expand trades training opportunities throughout the province.
- ✓ Invested an additional \$68 million in capital highway spending over the last three years.
- ✓ Re-established the Department of Tourism and Culture, strengthened the Tourism Partnership Council, and expanded marketing campaigns to encourage tourism year round.
- ✓ Invested \$5 million through our Cultural Industries Program to increase awareness and expand export sales of Nova Scotia's art, theatre, music and literature.

*"These campaigns are strategic by concentrating on markets that need extra attention. This new investment is also a show of support for our vision of a 100 per cent increase in tourism revenues in the next ten years."*

*Bill Hay*

*Senior Vice President of the Tourism Industry of Nova Scotia*



- ✓ Improved service to both businesses and individual Nova Scotians through a variety of new service locations and new e-government initiatives, including the Nova Scotia Business Registry, the Nova Scotia Permits Directory and Registry 2000.
- ✓ Introduced a New Farm Entrants Program to help young Nova Scotians take up farming.
- ✓ Provided unprecedented income support to farm families hurt by weather-related conditions or market fluctuations.
- ✓ Enhanced efforts to stop illegal fishing, buying and selling.
- ✓ Established new industry-supported, cooperative efforts to revitalize our forests and new funding to replenish our Crown land forests.

*"These are just some of the commitments we made in 1999 to grow Nova Scotia's economy and help create more jobs. These are just some of the commitments we followed through on to make Nova Scotia a more attractive place to invest and succeed, to live, work and raise a family. The results are beginning to show, with more Nova Scotians working than ever before. Nova Scotians are benefiting from a more prosperous economy, confirming that we are on the right track. And while much has been accomplished, there is much more to do. My government will continue to work with Nova Scotians to help grow our economy, making sure there are more opportunities for our children and their children to have a good job and a good future right here at home." – John Hamm*

*"This is the kind of assistance we need to get out there and try new things and gain new ground. It's certainly a boost to the continued economic growth of cultural enterprise in Nova Scotia."*

*Jim Stewart*

*President of Music Industry Association of Nova Scotia*



## **A Plan that's Working – the Next Steps**

A strong, diverse economy remains a priority for us.  
Our goals are to:

- Help the private sector create at least 30,000 new jobs in next four years.
- Post trade surpluses in each year of our mandate.

Key elements of our strategy are support for small business, an efficient transportation network, expanding exports and investments, stronger communities, our culture and hospitality, new energy opportunities and our resource sector. In partnership with Nova Scotians, a Progressive Conservative Government will:

- ☐ Continue to be a responsible government that lives within its means.
- ☐ Ensure that Nova Scotia has the most competitive tax environment in Atlantic Canada.
- ☐ Guarantee the 10% payroll tax deduction takes effect January 1, 2004.
- ☐ Complete the remaining steps in Opportunities for Prosperity, including supporting Nova Scotia's ocean, land and tourism sectors and assisting the continued growth of emerging industries: life sciences, energy, advanced manufacturing and the learning and digital economies.
- ☐ Extend Nova Scotia's Research and Innovation Trust Fund to continue supporting university and hospital research.
- ☐ Continue to expand e-government services/approvals/payments across government and expand the one-stop shopping services offered through Nova Scotia Business Registry through new negotiated agreements with other levels of government.
- ☐ Take further action to reduce red tape through a new process to streamline the regulatory environment across government and between governments.
- ☐ Invest in new entrepreneurship training in co-operation with our school boards, community colleges and universities, so Nova Scotia can nurture more homegrown business leaders.
- ☐ Use the recently signed Provincial Nominee Program as a catalyst for developing a comprehensive immigration policy for Nova Scotia.
- ☐ Convene a tri-partite labour relations roundtable – with representatives from the private sector, public sector and organized labour – to discuss ways to improve collective bargaining and to ensure Nova Scotia's labour climate supports a growing economy.

### **Support for small business**

#### *Encouraging entrepreneurship*

- ☐ Continue to increase the annual business limit under which the small business tax rate applies from \$225,000 (03-04) to \$300,000 (06-07), saving qualifying small business \$11,000 per year.



- ❑ Establish a Small Business Growth Division within Nova Scotia Business Inc.
- ❑ Work with stakeholders to direct a portion of Nova Scotia Pension Funds to Nova Scotia investments.
- ❑ Increase access to capital by investigating the creation of a capital pool program.
- ❑ Develop an aggressive program to help small business bid on government goods and services, including establishing a new Supplier Development Program and providing new outreach services and community workshops on accessing procurement opportunities.

## **Roads, bridges, rails, airports and ports**

### *Supporting an integrated road, sea and rail network for getting our products to market*

- ❑ Increase funding for 4Rs program (resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation and reconstruction) of provincial highways by 10 per cent over four years.
- ❑ Implement a multi-year plan to expand Nova Scotia's 100 series highway system to improve safety, expand capacity and stimulate economic growth.
- ❑ Double the funding for rural road improvements through the Road Improvement Money (RIM) program, from \$10 million to \$20 million by year four.
- ❑ Implement a five-year \$50 million Steel Truss Bridge Replacement Program.
- ❑ Legislate and co-operatively fund a new Capital District Transportation Authority in consultation with the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) to resolve the growing traffic/transportation-related problems resulting from HRMs' growing population.
- ❑ Implement a comprehensive Salt Management Strategy to reduce the impact on the environment and achieve cost efficiencies.
- ❑ Continue to press the federal government to establish a long-term national transportation strategy that allocates a greater share of federal gas tax dollars to Nova Scotia highways.
- ❑ Support the growth of the Halifax International Airport, in concert with promoting complementary cargo and passenger opportunities for smaller Nova Scotia airports, such as Yarmouth and Sydney.
- ❑ Urge the federal government to return a greater share of the net profit it earns from Nova Scotia airport fees to the province's airports.
- ❑ Work with Canadian National, Via Rail Canada, as well as current and potential short-line operators, to identify new business cases for expanding freight and passenger rail service.
- ❑ Urge the federal government to improve the competitiveness of major transportation assets, such as the Port of Halifax, through such ways as allowing major Canadian ports to issue tax-exempt bonds to raise capital for infrastructure improvements.



- ❑ Continue to press the federal Minister of Transport to establish a permanent, long-term fund to address the capital needs of smaller ports, such as Sydney, Sheet Harbour, Yarmouth, Shelburne, Digby, Pictou and the Strait of Canso.

## **Expanding exports and investment**

### *Positioning our products abroad... growing businesses at home*

- ❑ Make a multi-year commitment to Brand Nova Scotia (minimum of \$700,000/year), to aggressively promote our products at home and abroad, increase procurement opportunities for local companies, and attract skilled expatriates/ immigrants to our province.
- ❑ Increase funding for the Business Retention and Expansion Program to ensure businesses stay and grow in Nova Scotia, with special attention to promoting Nova Scotia's agricultural and fish products.
- ❑ Work with other governments to review securities regulations to provide more flexibility for the private sector, especially small businesses.
- ❑ Introduce Fair is Fair legislation to ensure Nova Scotia business and Nova Scotia workers are provided a level playing field when governments in other jurisdictions unfairly restrict opportunities in their province.
- ❑ Work together with community stakeholders to preserve the existing runway infrastructure at CFB Shearwater presently under the control of National Defence. With the infrastructure secured, develop a strategic plan to use Shearwater as a centre for the future growth of Nova Scotia's aerospace industry.
- ❑ Continue to press Ottawa to ensure Nova Scotia aerospace and advanced manufacturing companies receive a fair share of federal procurement opportunities.

## **Stronger communities**

### *Working together to help all regions take charge of their own futures*

- ❑ Establish a Community Development Policy to help ensure the long-term sustainability and growth of Nova Scotia's communities, particularly smaller, rural communities, based on the advice gained through the Premier's Forum on Rural Issues and subsequent community consultations.
- ❑ Guarantee long-term financial support for the province's 13 Regional Development Authorities (RDAs).
- ❑ Establish a Provincial Capital Commission to protect our provincial capital's valuable heritage sites and maximize the public benefit of provincially owned properties.
- ❑ Cost-share, in conjunction with the municipalities, federal government and private sector a Main Street Program to help smaller communities improve their business centres.



## Culture and hospitality

### *Building on the strength of our world-wide reputation*

- ☐ Guarantee minimum one month processing time for small production companies eligible for the Nova Scotia's Film Development Tax Credit.
- ☐ Establish and fund Nova Scotia's first Music Strategy in consultation with the Music Industry Association of Nova Scotia, including developing new marketing and export opportunities that highlight Nova Scotia's musical talent.
- ☐ Develop, in partnership with the Tourism Partnership Council and the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia, a Signature Attractions Program.
- ☐ Establish a new Nova Scotia Book Publishers Tax Credit and launch a new industry growth program for Nova Scotia Book publishers.
- ☐ Examine, in cooperation with other levels of government and key stakeholders, the feasibility of creating A Nova Scotia Celebration Centre to promote Halifax as a port of call. Centre would highlight Nova Scotia's heritage and culture, its innovation, musical and artist talent.
- ☐ Work with the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia and Tourism Partnership Council to increase the value of tourism, including more support for off-season marketing.
- ☐ Support a variety of new attractions, including developing an application for UNESCO World Heritage designations for Joggins and Grand Pré, conducting a feasibility study for expanding the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic on the Halifax waterfront, and increasing promotional support for the Bay of Fundy region.
- ☐ Implement changes to the Accommodations Act and regulations to reduce the red tape burden on small tourism operators.
- ☐ Building on the anticipated success of the 2004 Congrès mondial acadien, work with all Nova Scotia communities, including First Nations, to promote the 400th anniversary of permanent European settlement in our province for the year 2005.

## Energy opportunities

### *Promoting the development of offshore resources and energy technologies*

- ☐ Adopt a new Energy Act, to help make the business climate more efficient and encourage more offshore exploration.
- ☐ Work with the Offshore/Onshore Technologies Association of Nova Scotia (OTANS) and Regional Development Authorities (RDAs) to establish a joint Nova Scotia Oil and Gas Business Registry aimed at achieving local benefits and attracting new business and opportunities.
- ☐ Work with industry to establish the Energy Futures Scholarships for high school, community college and university students studying in the oil and gas sciences and related fields.



- ❑ Increase Nova Scotia's competitiveness in the energy industry by developing and funding a new program to help Nova Scotia companies secure federal funds aimed at upgrading technological or human resources.
- ❑ Continue to aggressively work with other governments and industry through the Offshore Oil and Gas Issues Steering Committee to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Atlantic regulatory regime.
- ❑ Continue to press Ottawa to honour its commitment to make Nova Scotia the principle beneficiary of its offshore resources, through the federal-provincial review of the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Accord and the 1988 Agreement Act.
- ❑ Promote the use of clean, alternative energy by using Crown land for wind energy projects.
- ❑ Continue to support research into the impact on seismic testing on marine life.
- ❑ Continue to work with organizations like Clean Nova Scotia and the Ecology Action Centre on conservation and efficiency programs.
- ❑ Increase research and development efforts, in concert with the private sector and post-secondary institutions, on the challenges and opportunities in Nova Scotia's energy sector.

## **Resource sectors**

### *Preserving and promoting the vitality of our resource sectors*

- ❑ Work with the Federation of Agriculture to launch an aggressive campaign to promote farming as a valued career choice.
- ❑ Establish Farm Growth Planning, a new program to assist farmers who develop 3 to 5 year business plans with the technical and financial assistance they need to support better farming practices and increased production. Program will allow for assessment and funding for a specified range of supports based on individual farm needs.
- ❑ Continue to support Nova Scotia farmers through income risk stabilization programs and provide investment assistance, such as credit and financial services through the Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board.
- ❑ Provide increased support for farmers in identifying new business opportunities both at home and abroad, including dedicating resources within the Business Retention and Expansion Program offered through Nova Scotia Business Inc.
- ❑ Work with the Federation of Agriculture to help Nova Scotia producers maximize their market share by increasing awareness of Nova Scotia-grown fresh and processed agricultural products as part of Brand Nova Scotia.
- ❑ Promote growth in the fishery sector by advancing product quality and value-added production through marketing and trade services.



- ❑ Continue to press the federal government for a fair share of marine resource allocations for Nova Scotia fishermen.
- ❑ Implement new Code of Forest Practices.
- ❑ Enhance Nova Scotia's Forestry Strategy by working with industry and interested stakeholders, starting with the release of the first Annual State of the Forests Report.
- ❑ Create a New Growth program for Nova Scotia hardwood value-added products.
- ❑ Complete negotiations with the federal government for the transfer of Devco coal leases to the province and begin tendering for new private sector development of the coal reserves, including those in the Donkin resource block.
- ❑ Establish a tax credit for qualified mineral exploration to encourage responsible expenses related to flow-through shares.
- ❑ Undertake additional changes to the Mineral Resources Act to improve the management and administration of the province's mineral resources.
- ❑ Develop, in cooperation with the Office of Economic Development, a Mineral Development Strategy that will include a coordinated "one window" process for providing scientific, technical and policy information.

*"This is an opportunity for everyone, including woodlot owners, industry and government, to work cooperatively to ensure our forests are sustainable for the future."*

*Greg Shay*

*Co-Chair of Association for Sustainable Forestry*





**Better.  
Faster Health Care.  
Healthier  
Nova Scotians.**

*"I was a doctor before I was Premier. I knew then, as I do now, that providing Nova Scotians with better and faster access to health care requires solid information, good planning, a cooperative approach and, of course, the people and the resources to make things happen. More importantly, I know that in order to reduce the demands on our health care system we need to start looking at health care differently.*

*That is why, well before I went to the voters in 1999, I outlined a detailed plan to improve the care we provide Nova Scotians. It included a commitment to retain and recruit more nurses and doctors. It included a commitment to: more fully involve communities and our health care partners in bringing services closer to home; reduce wait lists; and to base decisions on good information.*

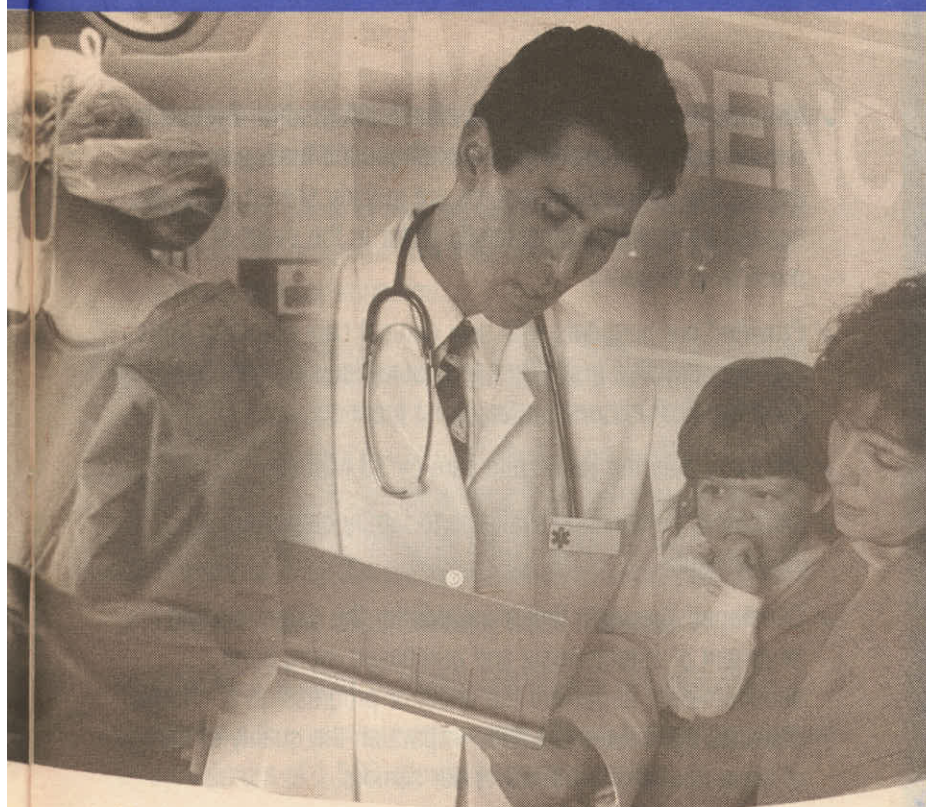
*My plan also spoke of the need to address Nova Scotia's high chronic disease rates through new efforts to promote healthy living. We didn't just stick to our plan, we built on it and the results are now showing." — John Hamm*

*"After all that we have experienced and learned as parents of a young woman who has been consumed by a terrible eating disorder, my wife Cathy and I are very pleased our project can go forward."*

*Jim Stockman*

*Eating Disorders Community Support Group, Yarmouth*





## **Proven Leadership – the Record**

It's clear that having a plan for health care achieve results. We've come a long way since 1999.

### **In partnership with Nova Scotians, the John Hamm Government has:**

- ✓ Hired more than 200 new doctors. Nova Scotia now has the second highest doctor-to-patient ratio in the country; an average of one new doctor every two weeks.
- ✓ Launched Nova Scotia's first Comprehensive Nursing Strategy. In the last year alone, Nova Scotia recruited more than 110 nurses from outside of the province.
- ✓ Introduced legislation to recognize nurse practitioners and funded new Nurse Practitioner training opportunities
- ✓ Guaranteed multi-year funding for our hospitals (the first in the country). Over the next three years front-line care will be supported with an additional investment of \$124 million, leading to better planning, better management and reduced wait times.
- ✓ Shortened wait times for nursing home care through Single Entry Access and protected the quality of care through an additional investment of \$75 million.
- ✓ Reduced wait times for access to Home Care with additional investments totaling \$40 million.
- ✓ Provided over \$7 million since 2002 to improve cardiac care.
- ✓ Purchased \$30 million worth of new medical equipment, such as MRIs, Cat scans and bone densitometers, reducing wait times for diagnosis and treatment.
- ✓ Released a comprehensive plan to expand and improve access to primary health care that includes efforts to increase the number of community clinics and measures that will see doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, and other key health professionals working side-by-side to better respond to the physical, mental and emotional needs of Nova Scotians.



- ✓ Invested in a new Medical and Health Information System to reduce redundant and expensive diagnostic testing and to ensure that vital patient records are quickly shared on an as-needed basis with professionals faster in the event of a medical emergency.
- ✓ Provided our hospitals with new clinical care planning tools and best practice guidelines to ensure decisions are based on solid medical information and best practices.
- ✓ Increased funding for respite care by \$3. Million.
- ✓ Increased the tax relief available to family caregivers by 75 per cent.
- ✓ Developed Canada's first standards for the diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis and purchased more bone densitometers to prevent the onset or progression of chronic diseases that have a dramatic impact on the quality of life of Nova Scotians, particularly our seniors.
- ✓ Developed new standards and a strategy to provide faster, community-based care for Nova Scotians requiring mental health services, as well as \$3.1 Million to establish intensive community-based treatment teams and a residential rehabilitation centre for children with severe mental health or emotional disorders.
- ✓ Funded new programs and services to support women and youth with addictions.
- ✓ Provided more community-based supports for children with autism and/or PDD by \$6 Million.
- ✓ Improved supports for patients diagnosed with cancer, (Cancer Care Nova Scotia's Patient Navigation System) and heart disease (ICONS: Improving Cardiovascular Outcomes in Nova Scotia).

*"While we have made significant strides that are helping Nova Scotians receive better care closer to home, our ultimate goal is to address the huge demands on our health care system. And the best way to do that is to help Nova Scotians embrace healthy living." – John Hamm*

*To that end we:*

- ✓ Established Nova Scotia's first Minister and Office of Health Promotion.
- ✓ Launched Nova Scotia's first Comprehensive Tobacco Control Strategy.
- ✓ Introduced one of North America's most progressive anti-tobacco laws (one of only three provinces in the country).
- ✓ Launched Active Kids Healthy Kids and physical activity strategy for youth.
- ✓ Launched Healthy Beginnings – home visitations for parents and their newborns.
- ✓ Launched Healthy Food Choices in our Schools.
- ✓ Invested in the Sport Futures Leadership Program



- ✓ Gave Community Health Boards a real and meaningful voice in shaping health care decisions in their communities.
- ✓ Established pilots in nine schools to identify in-school and after-school programs that support active living within our schools and communities.

*"Since 1999 my government has also worked hard to address the factors that influence health. We understood in 1999, as we do now, that our health is affected by many things, including the quality of our water and air, housing, income and education levels." – John Hamm.*

- ✓ Introduced New Clean Drinking Water Standards.
- ✓ Outlined a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- ✓ Signed a five-year agreement with Ottawa to build or renovate a minimum of 1,500 affordable housing units.
- ✓ Provided welfare families with new and increased supports to help them enter the workforce, including a one-year extension of pharmacare for recipients who start working.
- ✓ Eliminated the clawback on the National Child Benefit.
- ✓ Introduced new community-based programs through Family Resource Centers to support healthy child development.
- ✓ Launched Nova Scotia's first School for Adult Learners.
- ✓ Established a program to assist farmers adopt new environmentally safe farming.
- ✓ Opened up 400 full and part-time day care spaces.
- ✓ Invested \$50 million over last three years in green projects such as municipal water and sewer improvements/or recreational facilities under the \$163 million Federal/Provincial/Municipal infrastructure program.

*"Recruitment to rural practice can be challenging but having co-operative work experience positions funded by the provincial nursing strategy has assisted Cumberland County in showcasing our care settings to future registered nurses."*

*Cheryl Howell, Vice-President of Patient Care Services  
Cumberland District Health Authority*



**Better.  
Faster Health Care.  
Healthier  
Nova Scotians.**

*"My Government is committed to building on the significant progress made over the last four years. The following outlines the next steps we will take to make sure Nova Scotians get the care they need when they need it. It also outlines an ambitious but realistic plan that will see Nova Scotians go from being amongst the least healthy people in Canada to a model of health and fitness." – John Hamm*

**Our goals:**

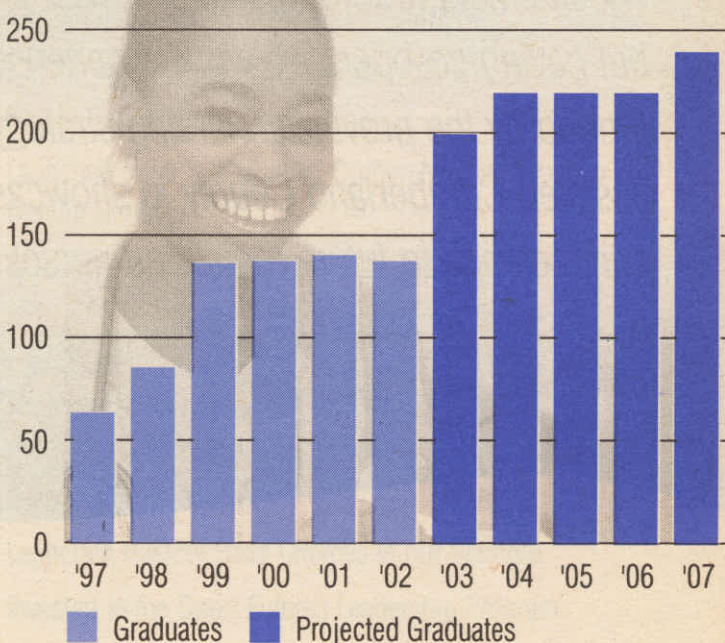
- To provide financial stability to health care professionals and planners so they can implement long-term plans to improve patient care and access.
- To ensure every Nova Scotian has access to the medical professionals they need.
- To promote choices that lead to healthy lifestyles for Nova Scotians.

We are committed to improving health care for Nova Scotians, providing better care and faster access. We will focus on doctors, nurses and other health professionals, shorter wait times, continuing care and independent living, better access to prescription drugs, and health promotion. In partnership with Nova Scotians, a Progressive Conservative Government will:

**Doctors, Nurses and Health Professionals – securing the right number and mix of Health Care Professionals**

- ☐ Add at least 350 more nurses to our health system.
- ☐ Continue to work with the Nova Scotia Nursing Network and fund Nova Scotia's Nursing Strategy by at least \$5.2 M in each of the next four years (20.8 M).

**Nova Scotia Nursing Graduates**





- ❑ Secure at least 100 more doctors through additional training and recruitment.
- ❑ In consultation with Dalhousie Medical School and the College of Physicians and Surgeons, streamline efforts to assess qualifications of internationally trained specialists and provide additional training opportunities for them to meet Canadian standards.
- ❑ Develop a long-term plan (currently under discussion with Dalhousie Medical School) to train more undergraduates and residents. To ensure we keep the doctors we train, seats will be set aside for Nova Scotia students with deferred tuition agreements for doctors who agree to work in communities where they are needed most.
- ❑ Introduce a new Medical Student Paid Co-op Program to support physicians in under-served areas and to encourage more medical students to pursue family practice.
- ❑ Train an additional 88 medical lab technologists, over the next four years, providing bursaries for those who agree to work in Nova Scotia.
- ❑ Use the information from the current assessment of 29 health professions (including X-Ray technologists, dieticians and pharmacists) to identify new training needs and incentives to address projected shortages.
- ❑ Provide bursaries to advanced paramedics in return for service agreements.

### **Shorter Wait Lists**

- ❑ Invest an additional \$45 million (Federal Equipment Fund) over the next three years in new medical and diagnostic equipment and staff training, including increasing the availability of MRI services in southwest and northern regions of the province.
- ❑ Require all District Health Authorities to monitor and report on wait list information using common measurement tools and standards. This information will be used to identify and develop plans to address priority areas, including providing funding for over time and weekend surgeries.
- ❑ Establish a Provincial Wait list Information Service so patients and their doctors have access to information on where testing or treatment can be accessed fastest.
- ❑ Use information gathered from current review of Emergency Room Service to reduce wait times for emergency care.
- ❑ Expand the number of community-clinics, including piloting specialized clinics (i.e. casting, splinting and stitching clinics) to reduce pressures on hospital-based emergency rooms, providing faster care to patients requiring immediate attention but non-life threatening care, as well as patients requiring urgent hospital-based care.
- ❑ Continue to expand the Hospital Information Management System so that all hospitals in Nova Scotia can share vital patient information, reducing costly duplication of diagnostic testing and sharing vital information in the event of a medical emergency.



## **Nursing Home Care and Independent Living**

- ☐ Invest an additional \$36.2 Million over next three years to cover the full medical costs of nursing home care and end all asset calculations for nursing home placement.
- ☐ Report and respond to recommendations for additional long-term care beds or other assisted living options based on findings of the Continuing Care review (currently underway). Also examine new, innovative alternatives for supporting independent living, including piloting client-focused assisted living projects with other governments.
- ☐ Establish a task force on Nova Scotia's aging population to make recommendations about future health and social programming needs.
- ☐ Based on recommendations from working groups currently examining rural Palliative Care, identify and fund next steps to expand access to end of life care.

## **Access to Prescription Drugs**

- ☐ Introduce a new Low Income Drug Assistance Plan for diabetics without drug coverage. As resources allow, extend the program to low income Nova Scotians with other chronic diseases.
- ☐ Aggressively promote 'Knowledge is the Best Medicine' an education campaign designed to prevent the over-use or misuse of prescription drugs.
- ☐ Work to expand the number of prescription drugs currently assessed under the Provincial Drug Monitoring Program.

## **Working with Health Partners**

*"In the past four years, my government has worked closely with non-profit organizations and our other health partners such as Community Health Boards and District Health Authorities to gather the information and set out the plans that will help Nova Scotians lead healthier, happier and more productive lives. We understand that in order to improve our overall health status, individual Nova Scotians, young and old, need to be supported in their efforts to lead healthier lives. We also understand that government must lead the way through better information, increased emphasis on healthy life-style choices at home, in school, in the workplace, and in our communities. Over the next four years my government will expand on the considerable efforts already underway to ensure Nova Scotia becomes the national model for improving the health of its citizens." — John Hamm*

- ☐ Outline a detailed plan with time lines for achieving the objectives outlined in the Nova Scotia Task Force on Primary Health Care, including more aggressively supporting an "integrated team approach" in care delivery.
- ☐ Implement the Report of the Integrated Stroke Care Strategy Committee in consultation with District Health Authorities. Strategy will include establishing a comprehensive and integrated stroke care system that includes health promotion, emergency and acute care, and rehabilitation.



- ❑ Develop and implement a Provincial Injury and Accident Prevention Strategy, including a Falls Prevention Education Campaign targeted to Nova Scotia's senior population.
- ❑ Continue to expand community-based mental health services by introducing crisis intervention services in all districts.
- ❑ Increase our investment in the professionals, community networks and equipment required to support cancer care.
- ❑ Develop additional 'shared care' pilots that link physicians with mental health professionals for effective early identification and treatment of depression and anxiety.
- ❑ Provide Community Health Boards with annual funding to support community-based health promotion and disease prevention strategies. On-going funding will be tied to a rigorous evaluation of outcomes.
- ❑ Create a "Kids N Care" navigation system for children and youth with emotional and behavioral problems to provide for early intervention and improved health outcomes.
- ❑ Introduce a new Mental Health Services Act.

### **Healthy Schools, Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Communities, Healthy Policy**

*"Nova Scotia's burden of illness is responsible for immeasurable personal suffering and loss. It also negatively impacts on our productivity and the economy. Government has an important role to play in addressing Nova Scotia's high rates of chronic illness. And we have. Over the past four years we have laid the foundation for better health. Over the next four years we will secure the results. We will ensure healthy public policy influences government decision-making. We will assist schools and workplaces to be more supportive of good health practices. We will encourage Nova Scotians to take personal action for their own health and we will reward schools, workplaces and communities that demonstrate a commitment to healthy living and healthy outcomes." — John Hamm*

Good health must be integrated into all aspects of our life — from home to school to work and our broader communities. Good health decisions must be part of our way of thinking and governing. In partnership with Nova Scotians, a Progressive Conservative Government will:

- ❑ Continue to work with our health partners on an evidence-based strategy to reduce Nova Scotia's high rates of chronic disease. Nova Scotia's Chronic Disease Prevention Plan will include a comprehensive, multi-year approach that includes targets and time lines.
- ❑ Double the funding for the Office of Health Promotion.
- ❑ Provide an allowable tax expense starting at \$150/per child to help off-set the cost of registering children and youth into sport or recreational activities that offer potential health dividends.



## **New Spending Commitments**

The following are new operational spending commitments that are not in current government plans (Learning for Life, Your Health Matters, Opportunities for All). All new capital spending referenced in this document has been accounted for in the Management Plan.

Our total new spending commitments represent approximately one per cent of the 2000-01 budget.

### **ECONOMY**

Double rural road improvement money

New music strategy

New Energy Growth Program

Nova Scotia Book Publishers tax credit

New planning for Growth Program - farmers

Flow-through Mineral Tax

Establish Provincial Capital Commission

### **EDUCATION**

Isolated Rural Schools Initiative

Province-wide School Accreditation Program

Provide one million more books, classroom resources

More class size reductions in the early years

Provide tuition funding agreements for special needs students

New advanced high school courses

Pilot free half-day pre-school

New support for struggling students

Single window career counseling

Double Student Loan employment/repayment bonuses

### **HEALTH**

Double the budget for Office of Health Promotion

Tax incentive for healthy-living initiatives

Low income Drug Assistance Program for Diabetics

Medical Student Co-op Program

Community Health Board funding

### **PROTECTING WHAT NOVA SCOTIANS VALUE**

Increase Income Ceilings for Seniors Emergency Home Repair

Eliminate Registry of Motor Vehicle fees - Community Accessible Transportation

Increase Support Domestic Violence Case Coordination

Establish Wheelchair Recycling Demonstration Project

Implement the operational recommendations of the Blac Report

### **TOTAL NEW ANNUAL SPENDING COMMITMENTS**

\*Represents total annual increase from Year 1 budget to Year 4 budget.



not already included and fully budgeted for in previously released initiatives for Prosperity, Nova Scotia Community College Growth Plan). accounted for in the 2003-04 budget and the Government's Debt

per cent of the government's annual budget.

	Time Frame				Annual Cost
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$10 Million*
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$750,000
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$350,000
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$50,000
		✓	✓	✓	\$250,000
		✓	✓	✓	\$800,000
		✓	✓	✓	\$230,000
		✓	✓	✓	\$1.1 Million
				✓	\$500,000
				✓	Current spending plus 100,000
		✓	✓	✓	\$12.2 Million*
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$400,000
		✓	✓	✓	\$250,000
		✓	✓	✓	\$500,000
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$1.9 Million
			✓	✓	\$450,000
			✓	✓	\$1 Million
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$15 Million*
		✓	✓	✓	\$1.3 Million
		✓	✓	✓	\$3.2 Million
		✓	✓	✓	\$300,000
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$1 Million
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$300,000
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$130,000
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$100,000
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$100,000
	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$4.1 Million*
					<b>\$56.36 MILLION</b>



- ❑ Implement and fund the next steps outlined in Active Kids/Healthy Kids, Nova Scotia's physical activity strategy for children and youth.
- ❑ Dedicate additional resources to support Esteem Team: Nova Scotia athletes go to schools and community-groups to speak of the value and benefits of sport and healthy living.
- ❑ Provide resources, in conjunction with the federal government and the private sector, to support KidSport, a program to raise funds to help offset the cost of organized sport for children and youth from low income families.
- ❑ Ensure our publicly owned schools are made available to support free after-school physical activities for youth.
- ❑ Guarantee a minimum of 6 hours of after-class time is provided to community groups that encourage physical activity.
- ❑ Require that municipalities receiving future Provincial Recreation Facility Funding provide established free family recreation time (i.e. family skating, swimming).
- ❑ Dedicate resources within the Office of Health Promotion, the Youth Secretariat and the Senior Citizens' Secretariat to identify and implement new community-based approaches that encourage healthy living among the young and old.
- ❑ Work with school boards to implement healthy eating policies as part of a comprehensive healthy eating strategy for Nova Scotia and introduce Our Healthy School initiative in all elementary schools by year four.
- ❑ Increase the number of Teen Health Centres throughout the province.
- ❑ Expand programs such as "Partnerships for Inclusion" and "Building Blocks" that support good parenting and healthy child development initiatives into more Family Resource Centres, making them the hub for community-based resources for families and children in the early years.
- ❑ Establish Regional Early Childhood Development Teams in each region to help parents access services to address their child's needs.
- ❑ Create Nova Scotia's first School and Workplace Health Champions Award. Winning strategies for promoting good health will be featured in a provincial media campaign and provided with a financial reward to be used to support on-going healthy school and workplace initiatives.
- ❑ Work with the Department of Education, NSTU and schools boards to expand health curriculum professional development opportunities.
- ❑ Introduce additional anti-smoking programs in our schools and workplaces, including launching "You Choose" in our schools (students determine anti-smoking ads) and providing workplaces with links to smoking cessation programs provided through local addiction services.
- ❑ Continue to fund Nova Scotia's Comprehensive Tobacco Control Strategy with a commitment to use a portion of additional revenues generated from future tobacco tax revenues to support anti- smoking programs and supports.



- ❑ Urge the federal government to partner with the province and Nova Scotia municipalities on a new multi-year infrastructure program that focuses on recreational facilities, green ways, hiking and biking trails.
- ❑ Develop a comprehensive, easy-to-use health information referral service and interactive web site to respond to information requests on government and non-government (i.e. Health Charities Network/Sport Nova Scotia) health programs, services and information. This service will be expanded over time to include detailed programs/services available in individual communities (i.e. accessible transportation services, volunteer home supports, peer support groups, CHB primary health care plans, etc.).
- ❑ Maximize the value of Nova Scotia's public health professionals (public health nurses, addictions counselors, paramedics, nutritionists etc) by examining new opportunities for their involvement in schools, Family Resource Centres and supporting CHBs in community health planning.
- ❑ Work with non-government organizations, including Health Charities Network and Sport Nova Scotia, to identify new strategies to encourage individual businesses and workplace organizations (Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, Labour) to promote workplace health.
- ❑ Ensure District Health Authorities and Community Health Boards have current and reliable information, allowing them to appropriately assess the health status of a community and establish targets for improving health in each community.
- ❑ Provide ongoing training and development opportunities for DHAs and CHBs in the areas of community mobilization, understanding and evaluating data, and the factors that influence health.
- ❑ Work with the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre to implement recommendations based on food security research to ensure healthy food choices are more accessible to all Nova Scotians
- ❑ Partner with municipalities and the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities to encourage and enhance development of trails and green ways.

*"More nurses will graduate and they will do so in a timelier manner because of your support, vision and foresight...This is surely good for Nova Scotia, good for the universities and good for nursing."*

*Dr. Sean Riley, President, St. Francis Xavier University*





## **Learning is Succeeding**

*"A good education is vital to personal growth and professional success. That is why, in 1999, I laid out a plan to focus on the student, to put the basics first, to provide our classrooms with more textbooks and resources, and to be more accountable to parents for student results.*

*My government has worked hard to focus on priority areas and to invest in better results. We put an end to "3P's" in school construction, and increased attention to the "3R's" in student learning. We invested in healthy, safe schools, professional development for our teachers, and introduced new measures to make our schools and our education system more accountable.*

*We've made good progress over the past four years in building a foundation to support learning for life. I know these efforts will lead to better educational results for our children and a more prosperous future for our province." – John Hamm*

*"Regardless of what other accomplishments she achieves during her term as the province's education minister, Jane Purves will be remembered as the minister who put the three Rs back into education."*

*Editorial  
Amherst Daily News*





## Proven Leadership – the Record

We're taking a common sense approach to education that focusses on the basics first, involves parents, measures outcomes and invests where it will have the greatest impact. Our plan is designed to nurture a culture of learning from the early years through to graduation, post secondary and continuing education.

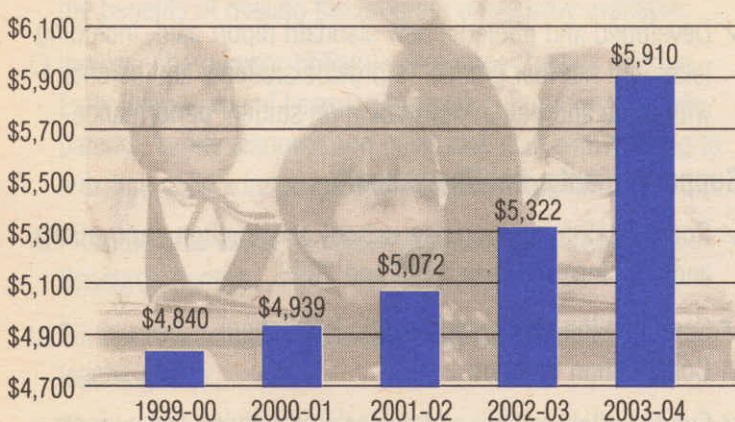
### Primary to Grade 12

*In partnership with Nova Scotians, the John Hamm Government has supported P-12 by:*

#### Investing where it counts

- ✓ Increased funding by more than \$1000 per student.
- ✓ Introduced new financial controls on school board spending.

**Funding Per Student**



### Increasing support for the early years

- ✓ Provided, in cooperation with IWK and other partners, books, baby's first library card, and information on reading development to 10,000 parents with newborns through Read to Me.



- ✓ Capped class sizes at 25 students, beginning in Grade Primary in September 2003, and in grades one and two in 2004 and 2005 respectively.
- ✓ Helped more struggling readers through added funding for Reading Recovery.

### **Supporting the basics first**

- ✓ Put more than 700,000 new books into the hands of young readers through Active Readers/Lecteurs actifs.
- ✓ Provided every grade four student with his or her own keep-it-for-life grammar handbook, through Writers in Action/Aide-mémoire d'écriture.
- ✓ Invested \$3.3 million in math textbooks, mental math resources, graphing calculators and other math learning tools.
- ✓ Increased teaching time in math, reading and writing through a new Time to Learn strategy.
- ✓ Tied professional development plans for teachers with new math and language arts programs.

### **Supporting success for all students**

- ✓ Added \$7.7 million (2000-03) for students with special needs, including \$2.5 million to hire resource teachers, speech language pathologists and other professionals.
- ✓ Increased the number of computers in schools (now one for every seven students compared to one for every 24 in 1996).
- ✓ Expanded access to Core French programs.
- ✓ Introduced a new racial equity policy.
- ✓ Funded the Youth Pathways and Transition Program to help at-risk students make a smooth transition from high school to college or university.

### **Increasing attention to results, increased accountability to parents**

- ✓ Introduced more student testing and began sharing results in an annual Minister's Report to Parents.
- ✓ Developed and piloted a new standard report card, including letter and number grades, to provide students and parents with more and better information on student performance.

### **Supporting safe, healthy schools**

- ✓ Spent \$212 million on new school construction, renovations and additions between 1999 and 2003.
- ✓ Scrapped the costly and chaotic P-3 School Construction Program.
- ✓ Funded pilots to help address school bullying and support the new Code of Conduct.

*"As a government we've been working to ensure our youngest students get off to the best start possible. In 1999, my plan also talked about opportunities for more young Nova Scotians to go to Community College, more educational opportunities for older Nova Scotians, and a new student debt program that rewards students who stay and work in our province." – John Hamm*



## **A Plan that's Working – the Next Steps**

We will continue to build on our plan for all levels of education and ensure that learning translates into success for a lifetime. Our priorities include putting the basics first, focusing on the student, helping those in need of extra support, being accountable to parents, supporting teachers in the classroom, and providing a safe and healthy place to learn. We will also focus on more training, research and resources.

### **Our goals:**

- To improve the performance of Nova Scotia Students in national and international testing.
- To reduce the teacher to student ratio.
- To foster a culture of learning earlier in a child's life.
- To maximize opportunities for young people to live and work at home.

### **Primary to Grade 12**

*In partnership with Nova Scotians, a Progressive Conservative Government will:*

- ☐ Increase funding by an additional \$1,000 per student by year four.

#### *Increase Support for the early years*

- ☐ Pilot a new Ready to Learn voluntary, free pre-school program for 4-year-olds, developed by the departments of Community Services, Education and Health. Curriculum will be activity-based, and emphasize socialization skills, to help children become more "ready to learn" by the time they enter school. Assessments, such as hearing and speech, will be carried out through the Ready to Learn program to target early intervention services for children in need. The first pilots will be targeted in areas where day care access is limited, and where school space is now available. Pilot evaluations will be conducted to determine the benefits of making the program universally available.
- ☐ Increase the number of Family Resource Centres offering Early Language and Learning Programs. Programs provide parents, family resource and child care staff with training to enhance child's language and cognitive development.
- ☐ Promote greater use of parent volunteers within Family Resource Centres.
- ☐ Further reduce class sizes to provide more one-on-one teaching time.
- ☐ Beginning in 2005, combined Primary-Grade 1 classes would have a maximum of 20 students or an additional non-teaching adult in the classroom. These criteria would also apply to Primary and Grade 1 classes with students with special needs who have an individual program plan.



- ❑ In 2006, the criteria (combined classes/IPP students) for a 20 student maximum will extend to Grade 1-2 and 2-3 classes.
- ❑ In 2006, all grade three classes will have a maximum of 25 students.
- ❑ In 2007 all grade four classes will have a maximum of 25 students.

#### *Basics first*

- ❑ Provide students with at least one million more books, math tools, learnware packages and teaching resources (by Year 4).
- ❑ Continue testing program, including a new Grade 6 language arts test, where parents are provided, for the first time, with their child's individualized test results.
- ❑ Use individualized test results (Reading and Math) and teacher assessments to identify struggling students, and provide intervention and support for them in junior high to achieve better learning outcomes.
- ❑ Provide parents with additional information and strategies that support at home learning, such as "homework baggies" with learning activity cards. Emphasis will be placed on the early years in reading, writing and math.

#### *Success for all students*

- ❑ Complete the Learning For Life plan for students with special needs, including more professionals, assistive technology, Reading Recovery™ available to all Grade 1 classes, and individualized support for students (\$17.4 Million, 2003-2006).
- ❑ Develop and fund a new tuition support program for special needs students with individual program plans. The program will include a faster appeal process, including an ombudsman for students with special needs. The ombudsman will have authority to recommend options, including providing the equivalent of the annual per student funding to parents for students with IPPs attending private schools. Additional support could be offered to low-income families so ability to pay is not a barrier. As well, accountability agreements would be required with private schools.
- ❑ Establish a professional certification requirement for all new teacher assistants. Professional development will be provided for existing teacher assistants to upgrade their skills, as necessary, to meet the needs of the children they support.
- ❑ Expand the range of advanced high school in-class and distance education courses to include language arts, social sciences and the arts.
- ❑ Add resources to support the long-term viability of isolated rural schools, including establishing minimum standards for delivering classroom and distance education.



### *Attention to results, accountability to parents*

- ☐ Amend the mandate of School Advisory Councils to provide parents with a more meaningful role.
- ☐ Establish a province-wide School Accreditation Program with public reporting. Schools that need assistance will be provided with targeted resources, through the school advisory council, to support the school's improvement plan.
- ☐ Launch an interactive Web site to provide parents with plain language information on what students are expected to learn and achieve at different grades levels.
- ☐ Initiate structural, administrative and accountability changes, in consultation with teachers, schools boards and parent groups, to improve student results.

### *Teachers*

- ☐ Streamline the Teacher Certification process for faster turn-around time and broader course recognition.
- ☐ Continue to expand professional development opportunities for teachers in priority areas such as math and language arts.
- ☐ Audit the number of teachers teaching out of their field of study. Working with school boards, the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, and universities, identify strategies to better match teachers to their subject specialties.

### *Safe, healthy schools*

- ☐ Continue to invest in school construction, additions and renovations.
- ☐ Implement the recommendations of the Provincial Student Education Council report on bullying, including providing province-wide training sessions for teachers.



## **Proven Leadership – the Record**

### **Colleges, Universities, Life-long learning...**

*In partnership with Nova Scotians, the John Hamm Government has supported our colleges, universities and life-long learning with:*

- ✓ Increased operating funding for universities by more than \$60 million (cumulative).

#### *Provided more training opportunities*

- ✓ Added 1000 training seats so more Nova Scotians can go to Community College.

**Community College Funding**



- ✓ Expanded the virtual campus of the Nova Scotia Community College.
- ✓ Improved access to French post-secondary education by merging Université Sainte-Anne and Collège de l'Acadie.

#### *Increased support for students*

- ✓ Introduced a new Student Debt Relief Plan with a repayment bonus, and a debt relief bonus for graduates who stay and work in Nova Scotia. Students who qualify for the bonuses can have their debt reduced by as much as 40 percent.

*"This investment....marks a new era in post-secondary education. Our ability to contribute to vibrant communities has been enhanced through this announcement, and that is good news for every Nova Scotian."*

*Daurene Lewis*

*Principal, Halifax Campuses, Nova Scotia Community College*



*Worked with business, industry, and labour to plan for and meet job needs*

- ✓ Launched the Nova Scotia Skills Agenda and created the NS Skills Partners Forum to identify and plan education and trades training programs to address areas where future skills shortages are predicted.
- ✓ Introduced a new Apprenticeship Act and a modern apprenticeship program to make trades training more accessible to Nova Scotians. A new youth apprenticeship program will help young people get on track early for trades training.

*Supported research and lifelong learning*

- ✓ Established Nova Scotia's first Research and Innovation Trust Fund (\$15 M) to expand universities' access to research dollars, to recruit leading experts in a wide range of fields and to help commercialize innovative ideas.
- ✓ Increased funding for libraries.
- ✓ Increased community-based support for family and children's reading through the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund.

*"In 1999, we said what we would do to build a better education system and to encourage a culture of Life Long Learning. But we know there is more to do." – John Hamm*



## **A Plan that's Working – the Next Steps**

### **Colleges, Universities, Life-long learning...**

*In partnership with Nova Scotians, the John Hamm Government will:*

#### *More training opportunities*

- ☐ Increase the number of community college seats by another 1200 through multi-year funding for the Community College Growth Plan. The plan includes a new metro campus and upgrades at each of the provinces 13 campuses.
- ☐ Continue to expand apprenticeship training and help apprentices complete their training more quickly, including support for Nova Scotians who need to upgrade their literacy or numeracy skills before pursuing trades training.
- ☐ Increase our investment in the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learners to expand opportunities for older Nova Scotians to upgrade their education and skills.

#### *Students, universities, libraries*

- ☐ Increase student debt relief by doubling the employment and repayment bonuses in the new Student Debt Relief Plan.
- ☐ Guarantee multi-year funding for universities based on negotiated Memorandums of Understanding designed to: control tuition increases; reduce duplication; identify and support program offerings in areas that address Nova Scotia's skill needs; and make it easier to transfer credits among universities and community colleges.
- ☐ Develop a province-wide, comprehensive single-entry career development, education and employment service. Service would include more resources and support for in-school counseling and improve information sharing between business, labour, industry and education providers.

*"Nova Scotia has one of the highest median ages in Canada. Our lab will enable us to engage in research excellence providing the necessary evidence to develop policies that are responsive to our aging populations."*

*Janice Keefe*

*Canada Research Chair in aging and care giving*



*"We've seen great progress in our region. The School for Adult Learning has helped us work toward achieving our organizational goals and the goals of adult learners."*

*Eileen Perry*

*Coordinator of Cumberland Adult Learning Network*

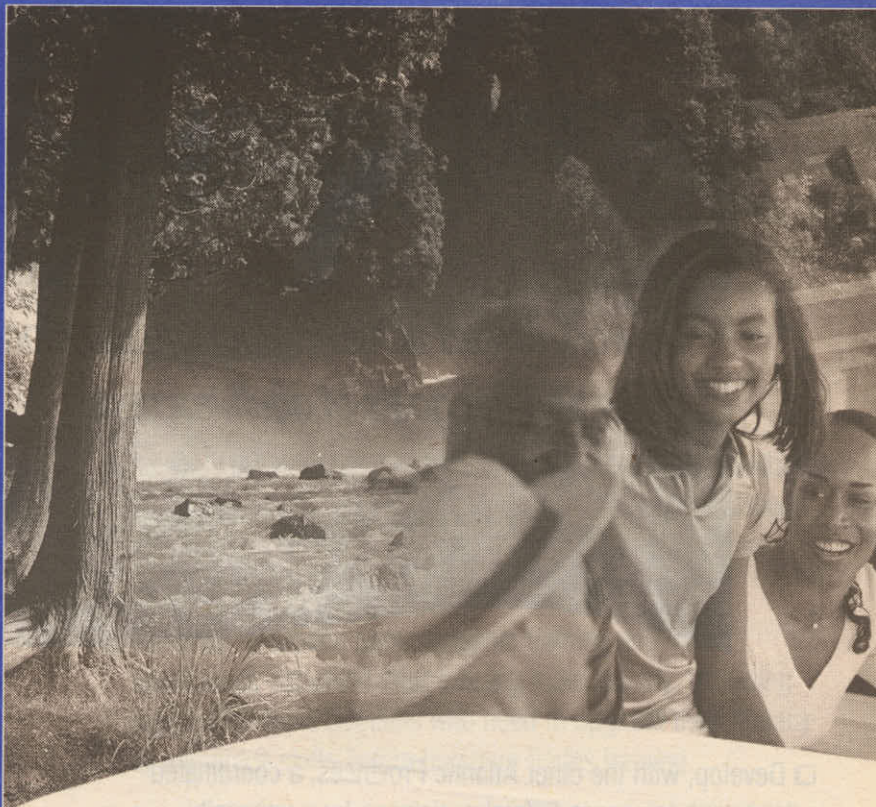
- ❑ Develop, with the other Atlantic Provinces, a coordinated approach to access federal assistance for a university, community college and library capital renovation and expansion program.
- ❑ Provide libraries with a greater role in the evolution of e-government services by gradually migrating Nova Scotia CAP sites into the Nova Scotia Provincial Library System, and by designating libraries as a key player in the delivery of e- government services.

#### *Research*

- ❑ Continue supporting university research through the Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust Fund.

*"Our education commitments are ambitious, and deliberately so. My government is determined to bring about better results in the early years that support better results for students throughout their school years and after they graduate. We are determined that our universities and community colleges work hand-in-hand with the private sector to ensure young Nova Scotians are positioned to take advantage of the jobs of tomorrow, and to help older Nova Scotians improve their education and their prospects for a better future for themselves and their families. We're determined to create a culture of learning for life, and in the process, build on our efforts to bring a new era of prosperity to our province." – John Hamm*





## **Protecting what Nova Scotians Value**

*"Nova Scotians enjoy an enviable quality of life. We work hard, but take the time to celebrate our culture, to care for one another and to enjoy our natural blessings. We value the contribution of our seniors, the importance of family, the pride of our communities, the diversity of our people, and the natural beauty of our province.*

*Despite the challenges of bringing fiscal stability to Nova Scotia for the first time in a generation, our government kept its word to protect what Nova Scotians value. Caring for those in need, protecting our unique culture and environment, and supporting the varied and diverse needs of Nova Scotians are core beliefs of this government. Over the last four years, we have acted to protect Nova Scotians and what they value most."* — John Hamm

*"It's promising to see the emphasis on improved salaries, professional development and training. These measures should improve the overall quality of child care in the province and enable us to find and keep quality staff..."*

*Goranka Vukelich, Executive Director  
of St. Joseph's College of Early Childhood Development.*





## **More Support for Seniors**

Protecting the core values of Nova Scotians has been important to us over the past four years. This includes protecting seniors, working families, our environment, and our cultural diversity. We are also committed to consumer protection and keeping our communities safe.

### **Proven Leadership – the Record**

*In partnership with Nova Scotians, the John Hamm Government has worked hard to support our seniors, including:*

- ✓ Removing the grandfather clause on the Property Tax Rebate program, ensuring all qualifying seniors receive tax relief on their homes.
- ✓ Exempting 7,000 additional low income seniors from paying the annual pharmacare premium, establishing maximum co-pays and investing almost \$10 Million in 2003 to freeze the annual co-pay and premium.
- ✓ Ensuring care needs, not ability to pay, determined nursing home placements.
- ✓ Introducing Single Entry Access to make it easier and faster to access home care and/or long-term care.
- ✓ Increasing Home Care funding by almost \$40 Million.
- ✓ Increasing Long Term care funding by \$74 Million and exempted more seniors' assets from when entering nursing homes. (Continuing Care increase of \$114 Million since 1999).
- ✓ Funding three Alzheimer's drugs through the Provincial Pharmacare Plan. The first province in Atlantic Canada to do so.
- ✓ Implementing new standards for the diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis and new funding for bone densitometers.
- ✓ Increasing funding for respite care.



- ✓ Increasing tax relief for family caregivers by 75 per cent.
- ✓ Providing a \$40 discount for seniors who voluntarily participate in safe driving programs.
- ✓ Redesigning the Programs for Senior's Directory to make it easier to read and more comprehensive.
- ✓ Funding additional staff through the Senior Citizen's Secretariat to ensure better outreach with seniors and improved service.
- ✓ Recognizing our veterans through the declaration of a Veterans Memorial Highway and the creation of a veterans' license plate, in concert with the Royal Canadian Legion.

*"There is one family who uses the hall for yearly get-togethers. Before the ramp was installed family members in wheelchairs stayed home because they couldn't get into the building. Now they'll be able to get in."*

Audrey Cook

*Clerk and Treasurer of the Isaac's Harbour Church and Hall*

## **More Support for Seniors**

### **A Plan that's Working – the Next Steps**

- ☐ Implement our plan to cover all health care nursing home costs and protect all seniors' assets by no later than year four.
- ☐ Increase the number of long-term care beds/other assisted living options, including day programs based on recommendation of Continuing Care Review (currently underway).
- ☐ Eliminate car insurance rate discrimination against seniors.
- ☐ Introduce legislation to eliminate mandatory retirement within the Civil Service.
- ☐ Launch an aggressive Falls Prevention strategy to help educate seniors about the steps they can take to prevent falls and injury.
- ☐ Dedicate additional resources to promote healthy living among older Nova Scotians and to develop community-based, peer-support and volunteer senior's networks.
- ☐ Expand Palliative Care to provide, high-quality access to end-of-life care to more Nova Scotian families.
- ☐ Increase the income ceiling for seniors applying to the Senior Citizens' Assistance Program (SCAP) from \$20,000 to \$22,000. Program provides seniors with assistance to make emergency repairs to their home.



- ❑ Launch a five-year Elder Abuse Strategy, including a comprehensive, coordinated campaign involving government, non-government agencies, as well as the private sector, designed to identify and address elder abuse. Strategy will also include new legislation to stiffen fines for those who physically, emotional or financially abuse seniors.

## **Supporting Families and Nova Scotians in Need**

### **Proven Leadership – the Record**

*In partnership with Nova Scotians, the John Hamm Government has worked hard to help families and Nova Scotians in need by:*

- ✓ Reduced provincial income taxes by 10 per cent effective July 1, 2003.
- ✓ Created a new Integrated Child Benefit and eliminated the clawback on the National Child Benefit.
- ✓ Supported Nova Scotians with disabilities by dedicating over \$1.5 Million to expand community-based transportation services and over \$1.1 Million to help more than 180 community groups make their buildings more accessible.
- ✓ Introduced new welfare-to-work incentives, including 400 more childcare spaces, increased transportation benefits, and extending Pharmacare to one year beyond assistance.
- ✓ Provided new supports for pre-school children and their families through the Early Childhood Development program with the federal government, including: establishing programs such as "Partnerships for Inclusion" and "Building Blocks"; and better training and support for staff and the parents.
- ✓ Launched Healthy Beginnings, a new program to provide home visitation and support to the parents of newborns.
- ✓ Constructed Nova Scotia's first secure treatment centre for young Nova Scotians with severe emotional and behavioral problems.
- ✓ Announced a new residential rehabilitation treatment centre for children with severe emotional or behavioral needs and establishing intensive community-based treatment teams, beginning in Halifax and Cape Breton: eventually extending to all District Health Authorities.
- ✓ Provided multi-year funding totaling \$6 Million (2000-2003) to provide increased support to children with autism and/or Pervasive Developmental Delay (PDD).
- ✓ Committed to at least 1,500 new low-income housing units/renovations through a five-year, \$38 Million affordable housing agreement with the federal government and other housing partners.
- ✓ Extended parental leave benefits for birth, as well as adoptive parents.



## **Supporting Families and Nova Scotians in Need**

### **A Plan that's Working – the Next Steps**

- ☐ Protect homeowners from sudden and dramatic increases in property assessments by working with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) to establish a limit on yearly increases in cases where there has been little or no physical change to the property.
- ☐ Improve childcare options through more childcare spaces and better training for childcare professionals.
- ☐ Expand the range of program and services offered through Family Resource Centres, particularly as they relate to good parenting, education and healthy living.
- ☐ Provide tax incentives and support new programs (KidSport) to reduce the cost of enrolling children and youth in formal sport/fitness programs.
- ☐ Provide low-income diabetics without drug coverage with assistance in covering cost of insulin and diabetic supplies. As resources permit, gradually increase drug coverage to other low-income Nova Scotians with chronic diseases.
- ☐ Establish in partnership with the Abilities Foundation and other organizations representing Nova Scotians with disabilities, a wheelchair recycling demonstration project for children 15 years and under.
- ☐ Introduce legislation that mirrors proposed federal legislation so that families can spend more time at home with a family member receiving palliative care at home.
- ☐ Continue to fund programs to improve access for Nova Scotians with disabilities, particularly the ACCESS-ability program and Dial-a-Ride.
- ☐ Eliminate Motor Vehicle Registration fees on community-based Accessible Transportation.

*"This is groundbreaking. This is Nova Scotia being a leader instead of a follower."*

*Catherine Clute  
Co-president of Adoptive Parents  
Association of Nova Scotia.*

## **Environment**

### **Proven Leadership – the Record**

Together with Nova Scotians, the John Hamm Government has worked hard to protect Nova Scotia's environment, including:

- ✓ Releasing a Green Plan for public input that outlines a long-term approach for protecting Nova Scotia's environment, including nominating Eigg Mountain and Gully Lake as protected spaces.



- ✓ Introducing new drinking water regulations, hiring 14 new water quality specialists, building or upgrading 18 new municipal water treatment plants and releasing a comprehensive Provincial Clean Water Strategy.
- ✓ Initiating the clean up of the Sydney Tar Ponds and Sysco sites.
- ✓ Establishing funding for harbour clean-ups in Halifax, Sydney and Lunenburg.
- ✓ Committing over \$50 million through the Canada-Nova Scotia Infrastructure Works Program, supporting over 100 community infrastructure projects, the vast majority supporting clean water and other environmental initiatives.
- ✓ Designating six new provincial parks and one provincial beach.
- ✓ Amending the Conservation Easement Act, making it easier to donate lands for conservation.
- ✓ Acquiring 6,000 acres of coastal properties, and designating over 15,000 acres of land for protection.
- ✓ Entering into agreements with organizations like such as Nature Conservancy of Canada, committing more dollars to protect valuable coastal property and species at risk.
- ✓ Passing regulations to ensure the sustainability of woodland diversity, water quality and wildlife habitat on all lands in forest production.
- ✓ Releasing a new Energy Strategy, establishing greenhouse gas emission targets and encouraging the development of environmentally friendly energy sources such as wind power.
- ✓ Establishing a Climate Change Strategy for Nova Scotia.
- ✓ Endorsing nation-wide standards for particulate matter and ozone levels, as well as the Canada Acid Rain Strategy.
- ✓ Developing a program to deliver pollution prevention planning to industry, in partnership with ACOA and Environment Canada.
- ✓ Supporting new environmentally safe farming practices.
- ✓ Entering into new stewardship agreements with the private sector to help divert more waste from Nova Scotia landfills.

## Environment

### A Plan that's Working – the Next Steps

- ❑ Implement Nova Scotia's Green Plan, following public consultation, and introduce amendments to the Environment Act to update, clarify and strengthen the law.
- ❑ Work with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities to examine joint provincial/municipal opportunities for addressing illegal dumping and derelict vehicles.
- ❑ Support new clean water and sewer projects under the Canada-Nova Scotia Infrastructure Works program.
- ❑ Complete the remaining elements of Nova Scotia's Clean Drinking Water and Energy strategies.



- ☐ Expand the Eco-Efficiency Program, in concert with the federal government, to help businesses reduce pollution.
- ☐ Expand the number of stewardship agreements with industry, including developing a standard electronics waste stewardship program in consultation with the other Atlantic Provinces.
- ☐ Acquire more coastal lands and wilderness areas for protection from development, where financial resources allow and in partnerships with such organizations as the Nature Conservancy of Canada.
- ☐ Proceed with the community's recommendation to clean up the Sydney tar ponds, through Nova Scotia's Sydney Tar Ponds Agency in concert with the federal government.

## **Cultural Diversity**

### **Proven Leadership – the Record**

*Together with Nova Scotians, the John Hamm Government has worked to advance the interests of all Nova Scotians, including:*

- ✓ Designating seats for African Nova Scotians on school boards.
- ✓ Introducing a new racial equity policy in our schools.
- ✓ Increasing funding to the Black Business Initiative.
- ✓ Signing an historic agreement with Nova Scotia's Mi'kmaq Chiefs on treaty-related issues.
- ✓ Expanding access to Core French programs in our schools.
- ✓ Dedicating resources to promote Nova Scotia's Acadian Celebrations.
- ✓ Signing an historic agreement with the Government of Quebec to promote French language within the province.

## **Cultural Diversity**

### **A Plan that's Working – the Next Steps**

- ☐ Appoint Nova Scotia's first Minister responsible for African Nova Scotian Affairs.
- ☐ Implement the operational recommendations outlined in the Blac Report.
- ☐ Commit to multi-year funding for the Black Business Initiative.
- ☐ Extend support to the Aboriginal Open for Business Centre to encourage investment in Nova Scotia's First Nations' businesses.
- ☐ Pursue efforts to finalize a framework agreement with the federal government and the Mi'kmaq that will identify issues to be negotiated by all parties.
- ☐ Aggressively promote Nova Scotian's upcoming Acadian Celebrations.
- ☐ Support an application to have Grand Prè and Joggins designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Sites.



## **Consumer Protection / Insurance**

### **Proven Leadership – the Record**

*Together with Nova Scotians the John Hamm Government has worked to protect consumers from unfair practices, including:*

- ✓ Referring the rising cost of automobile insurance to the Utility and Review Board (URB).
- ✓ Releasing a discussion paper on auto insurance for public feedback.
- ✓ Releasing a Consumers Guide to Automobile Insurance.
- ✓ Appointing a Consumer Advocate on Automobile Insurance.
- ✓ Passing legislation to freeze new auto insurance rate hikes until January 1, 2004.
- ✓ Passing regulations restricting the underwriting practices of insurance companies.
- ✓ Appointing an actuary to assist in developing additional car insurance reforms.
- ✓ Establishing a new Nova Scotia Review Board on Automobile Insurance.
- ✓ Establishing, in partnership with the other Atlantic provinces, the Atlantic Insurance Harmonization Task Force.
- ✓ Changing the Consumer Protection Act and the Mortgage Lenders and Brokers Acts to provide consumers with greater information and protection when entering into mortgage agreements.
- ✓ Amending the Consumer Protection Act to provide consumers with the right to basic information about sellers, contracts and on-line products and services.
- ✓ Introducing legislation requiring gasoline retailers to post gas prices.
- ✓ Funding to assist low income Nova Scotians with the cost of heating oil.
- ✓ Protecting retail gasoline dealers from the unfair downloading of national advertising campaigns to the local level.



## **Consumer Protection / Insurance**

### **A Plan that's Working – the Next Steps**

- ☐ Reduce automobile insurance by an average of at least 20 percent through a realistic 6-step plan:
- ☐ Freeze on new rates increases from May 03 to January 04.
- ☐ New restrictions on underwriting practices to prohibit discrimination based on age, sex non-driving related matters, and previous coverage in Facility Association.
- ☐ Requirement for a basic auto insurance package with a cap on minor injury claims and greater openness on the part of insurance companies.
- ☐ Establish a new Automobile Insurance Review Panel to approve all insurance rates and appoint a new actuary to ensure fair underwriting practices.
- ☐ Extend the consumer advocate position.
- ☐ Work with other Atlantic Provinces to harmonize insurance legislation and regulations and assess costs and benefits of a regional public insurance system.
- ☐ Allow for a trial period for Sunday shopping six weeks prior to Christmas, followed by a province-wide plebiscite in the fall of 2004 to determine if Nova Scotians want Sunday Shopping year-round.

## **Safer Communities /Streets**

### **Proven Leadership – the Record**

*Together with Nova Scotians, the John Hamm Government has worked hard to make our roads and communities safer and to ensure balanced justice, including:*

- ✓ Passing the Domestic Violence Intervention Act, giving victims of violence greater protection.
- ✓ Establishing a new Justice Learning Centre, to support police and other law enforcement agencies in their efforts to combat family violence.
- ✓ Increasing funding for legal aid for low-income Nova Scotians.
- ✓ Passing a Volunteer Protection Act to provide greater legal protection for not-for-profit, charitable organizations.
- ✓ Passing a Volunteer Fire Services Act and Firefighters' Compensation Act to provide greater benefits for volunteer and professional firefighters.
- ✓ Increasing capital highway spending by \$68 million over the last three years.
- ✓ Adopting numerous measures to improve highway safety, including: adopting tough anti- drunk driving measures such as 24-hour roadside suspensions; new school zone signing and piloting new highway rest areas.
- ✓ Lobbying the federal government to establish a Registry of Sex Offenders in conjunction with other provincial and territorial governments.



- ✓ Joining other provinces in refusing to use scarce provincial resources to prosecute charges under the federal long-gun registry.
- ✓ Adopting numerous amendments to the Justice Administration Act to streamline and improve legal and judicial services.

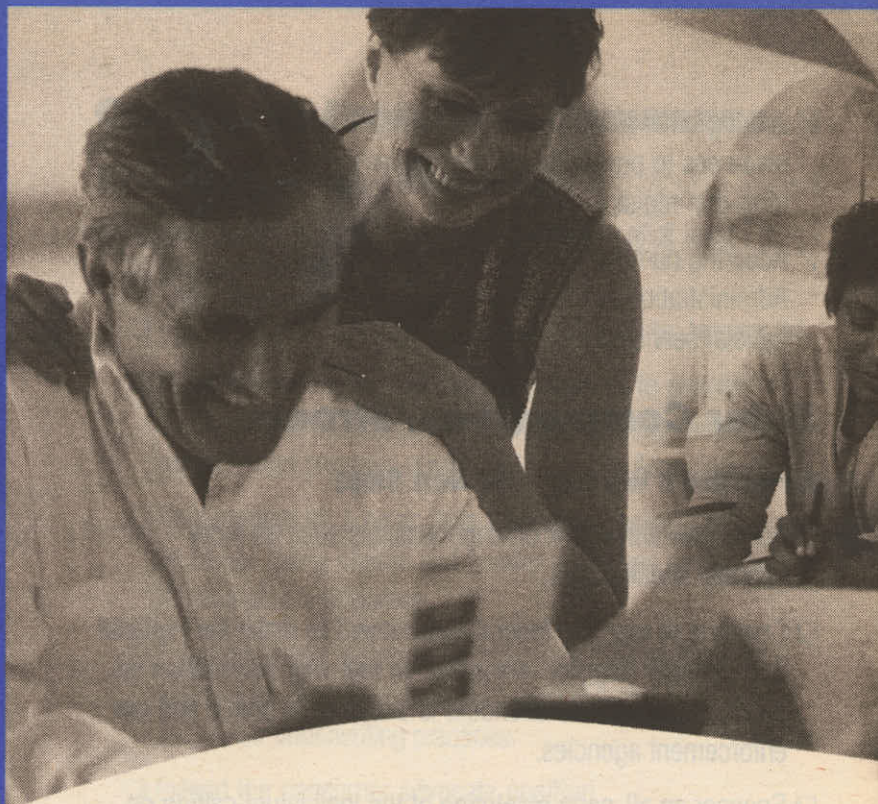
## **Safer Communities / Streets**

### **A Plan that's Working – the Next Steps**

- ☐ Adopt new anti-drunk driving measures such as more sobriety check points.
- ☐ Continue to urge the federal government to make the National Sex Offender Registry retroactive so that vital information on previously convicted offenders is available to police and law enforcement agencies.
- ☐ Sponsor an all-party resolution of the legislature calling on Ottawa to stop allowing conditional sentences for violent crimes, like manslaughter and sexual assault.
- ☐ Increase resources to support the Domestic Violence Case Co-ordination Program.
- ☐ Implement a new Justice Enterprise Information Network to improve information sharing among justice officials.
- ☐ Improve access to the Supreme Court Family Division and urge the federal government to expand services province-wide.
- ☐ Establish a province-wide youth court to ensure effective prosecution of young offenders.
- ☐ Increase support for victims of crime, including through additional measures to force criminals to provide restitution.
- ☐ Continue to urge Ottawa to match Nova Scotia's increased support for legal aid.
- ☐ Continue to work with the federal government, RCMP and local law enforcement agencies to take whatever new steps necessary to protect public safety in the face of new terrorist threats.

*"We have kept our word to provide greater care to seniors, children and families. We have kept our word to provide greater environmental protection. We have kept our word to strengthen consumer protection and keep our streets and communities safe. But we know that while much has been accomplished, more needs to be done." – John Hamm*





## **Order in the House**

### **Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability**

*"I believe that fiscal responsibility and accountability are crucial to attracting new investment, creating new jobs and generating the revenues needed to pay for vital services in future.*

*In 1999, there was no plan to eliminate Nova Scotia's \$500 million deficit, to slow the rate of growth of the province's out-of-control debt, or to stimulate the economy through lower taxes.*

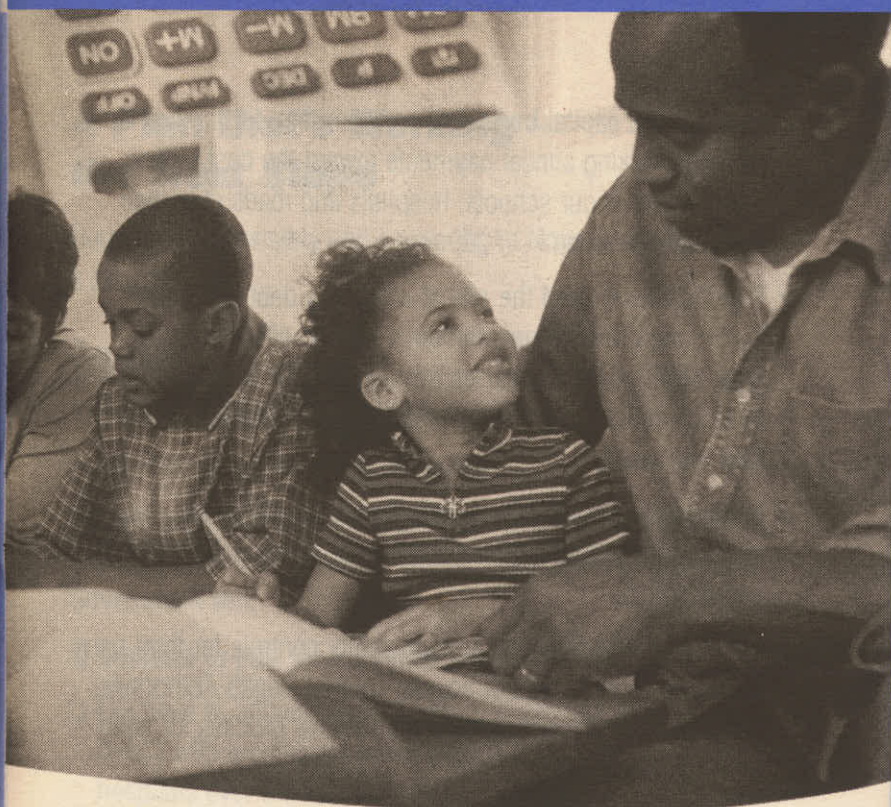
*That is why four years ago, I told Nova Scotians that a government under my leadership would eliminate Nova Scotia's \$500 million deficit within three years, provide tax relief the year after and set realistic targets for reducing the debt. I also told Nova Scotians that balancing the budget would not have to come at the expense of their priorities: better education, health care and roads. My plan also spoke of the need to maximize the value of every tax dollar, as well as the need for greater accountability and openness." — John Hamm*

*"Nova Scotia has substantially reduced its business risk... Now they have delivered a debt reduction strategy. There is a window here to start getting the debt down and to trim the tax burden so that it is competitive."*

*Mary Webb*

*Senior Economist, Bank of Nova Scotia.*





### **Proven Leadership – the Record**

Clearly, a lot has been accomplished toward greater fiscal responsibility and accountability over the past four years. In partnership with Nova Scotians, the John Hamm Government has:

- ✓ Invested more money in our schools, hospitals and roads in each and every year we were in government.
- ✓ Tabled Nova Scotia's first truly balanced budget in 40 years in 2002-03, followed by second balanced budget this year.
- ✓ Lowered personal income taxes by 10 percent effective July 1, 2003, with full costs netted against provincial revenues.
- ✓ Lowered small business taxes by raising the limit under which the small business tax rate applies saving qualifying business \$2,750 this year.
- ✓ Adopted Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), the most open and transparent accounting practices in the country.
- ✓ Required government departments to publicly release annual business plans and annually report on their success in meeting performance targets.
- ✓ Improved Nova Scotia's Debt-to-GDP ratio, the most commonly used indicator determining a government's ability to re-pay its debt. In 1999-2000 the ratio of net direct debt to gross domestic product was 46 percent. In 2003-04 it is estimated at 41.1 percent.
- ✓ Exceeded targets for reducing Nova Scotia's Foreign Currency Exposure. In 1999, it was above 50 per cent. Today it is under 20 per cent.
- ✓ Applied annual operating surpluses, as well as the proceeds from the sale of Crown assets (Sysco, NSRL) directly to the debt.



- ✓ Introduced a capital borrowing program that, for the first time, includes making annual payments toward the cost of new investments in our schools, hospitals and roads over their expected life- span.
- ✓ Significantly slowed the rate at which the debt has grown. During the previous government's term in office the debt grew \$600 million a year on average (\$3.6 billion), compared to \$125 million a year on average (\$500 million) over the past four years.
- ✓ Introduced a realistic Debt Reduction Plan, while still allowing for further capital investments in our roads, schools and hospitals.
- ✓ Introduced new financial accountability controls for third party spending such as school boards, District Health Authorities, and established new business plan review process for Long-term Care facilities.

*"In 1999, many Nova Scotians said we couldn't possibly keep our commitment to invest in roads, hospitals and schools and still balance the budget and lower taxes. But we had a plan and we stuck to it and the results are now showing. Record numbers of Nova Scotians working, fewer Nova Scotians are on welfare, and more leading-edge companies are making Nova Scotia their new home. Sound fiscal management, combined with the energy and confidence of Nova Scotia's private sector, helped make this possible. Together we've made good progress. Together we can accomplish so much more."*

*— John Hamm*

*"The Government of Nova Scotia should be commended for staying the course on its deficit elimination plan, no easy feat given the sizeable magnitude of its recent shortfalls."*

*TD Bank, April 5, 2002*



## A Plan that's Working – the Next Steps

Budgeting responsibly and answering to Nova Scotians remains a priority.

### Our goals:

- Increase public/private capital investment.
- Improve Nova Scotia's credit rating.

We will work hard to meet these goals over the next four years. In partnership with Nova Scotians, a Progressive Conservative Government will:

- ☐ Continue to post uninterrupted balanced budgets.
- ☐ Continue to address Nova Scotia's significant infrastructure deficit with increased capital spending on roads, schools and hospitals over the next four years.
- ☐ Introduce legislation and enshrine in law a three-part Debt Reduction Plan that includes: annual process of creating surpluses and contingency reserves for debt reduction; establishing a Debt Retirement Fund for retiring specific debt issues; and, designating a portion of Extraordinary Revenue to Debt Retirement Fund.
- ☐ Conduct, in consultation with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, a cost/benefit analysis to determine the potential of using provincial/municipal tax exempt bonds as a means of raising capital for future municipal infrastructure improvements.
- ☐ Enhance efforts to ensure provincial tax dollars are spent for their intended purpose (i.e. school maintenance dollars are spent on school maintenance) by conducting more value for money assessments of third party spending (i.e. school boards, District Health Authorities and universities).
- ☐ Provide 10% payroll income tax deduction effective January 2004.
- ☐ Continue to ensure Nova Scotia maintains the most competitive tax environment in Atlantic Canada.

### Annual Personal Income Tax Savings

	Current Taxes Paid	Taxes After Reduction	Savings Estimated
Single Earner \$26,000	\$1,675	\$1,507	\$168
Family of four one earner \$40,000	\$2,888	\$2,612	\$276
Family of four two earners \$65,000	\$4,833	\$4,356	\$477
Family of four two earners \$105,000	\$10,716	\$9,701	\$1,016



- ❑ Adopt future changes to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles within reasonable time frames, to ensure Nova Scotia remains a leader in open, accountable and transparent accounting practices.
- ❑ Identify and implement new opportunities for bulk purchasing at the provincial level.
- ❑ Introduce standard accounting, payroll and human resource systems for larger public service entities to ensure maximum value for money and to enhance accountability throughout the broader public service.

## **Conclusion**

The four year plan you have just read is grounded by our fiscal reality, guided by our values as Nova Scotians and driven by our commitment to do what is doable.

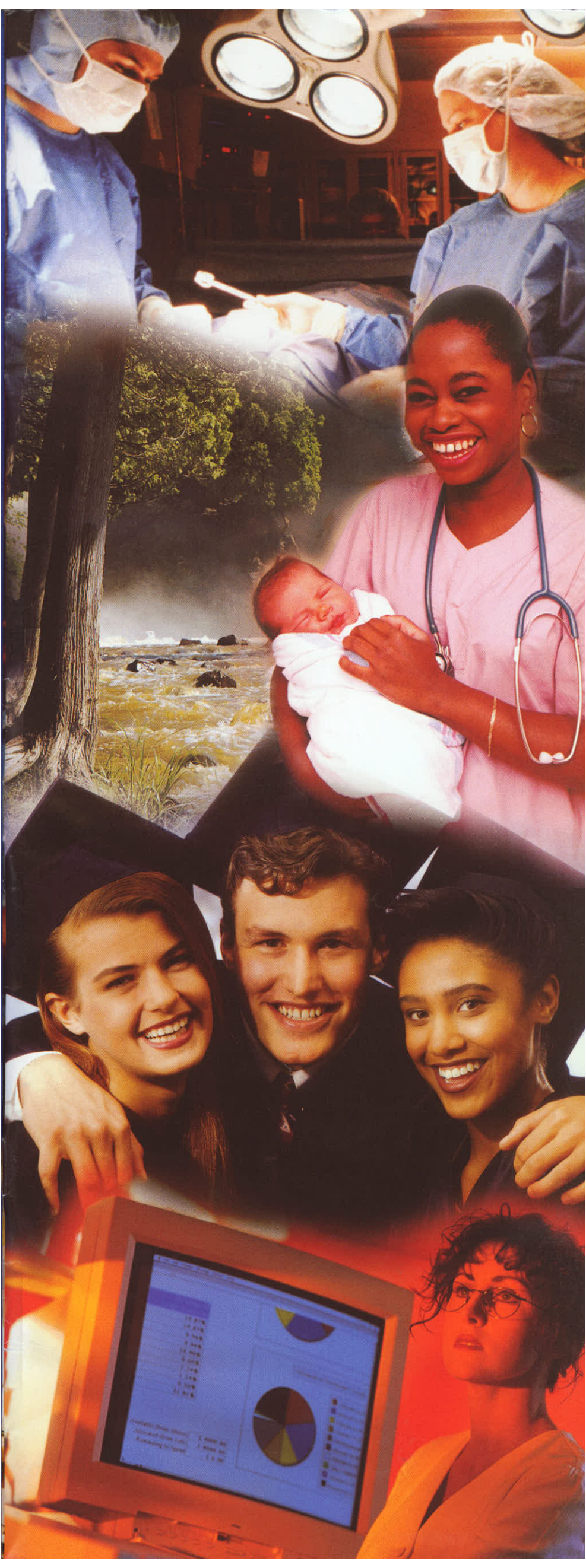
Our record as a government is in black and white, the results are measurable, and the progress we've made together with Nova Scotians clear.

Thank you for taking the time to read the next steps in our plan to make Nova Scotia an even better place to live, work and raise a family.

*"We congratulate  
this government for  
staying the course  
they promised us  
when elected,"*

*Jeff Sommerville,  
Metropolitan Chamber  
of Commerce  
April 5, 2002*







*Every election is important, perhaps none more so than this one.*

*Nova Scotia is finally moving in the right direction.*

*The deficit is gone and working families are paying less tax.*

*Record numbers of Nova Scotians are working and fewer are on welfare.*

*There are more resources in the classroom and more doctors and nurses providing better care.*

*And after years of neglect, we're fixing our roads and building new schools.*

*Together, on August 5th, let's continue to build on the progress we have made.*

*John Hamm*

**PC**



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