

[Min\\_LAE@novascotia.ca](mailto:Min_LAE@novascotia.ca)

November 9, 2021

Honourable Jill Balsler  
Minister of Labour, Skills and Immigration

Dear Minister Balsler:

**Re: Island Employment**

Thank you for your November 5, 2021 response to my recent correspondence regarding the 30 NSGEU members at Island Employment.

We have reviewed your letter and the Department's backgrounder. In both the backgrounder and the letter you and your Department claim that the department has ended its agreement with Island Employment because of regular monitoring of service providers along with the findings of a recent investigation.

It appears that the department is attempting to claim credit for discovering the issues first brought forward by employees at Island Employment and later described in the findings of the office of the Ombudsman. One of the key findings of the Ombudsman was that the monitoring and oversight by the department was lacking. It was the Ombudsman who brought the issue of financial mismanagement to light. If anything, the department's constant refusal to conduct any kind of further review gives the appearance that the department and government want this issue to go away. The Ombudsman's report was based on the analysis.

Minister, your response completely neglects the issue of how these 30 people are losing their employment due to issues between management, the board and the department. These members are being punished. Your response also does not deal with the question, why the department decided to end the contract with Island Employment when not a single recommendation from the Ombudsman's report recommended it. While you and the Department may find comfort in the statement that, "the decision to close Island Employment was made by the Board and management as an independent organization", it is too extraordinary to be believed that the department didn't know that ending the funding agreement would lead to the closure of Island Employment.

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Minister, while I understand why the Department and government would like this issue to go away, these workers and all Nova Scotians deserve to know what happened to cause your department to withdraw funding, ultimately putting these 30 workers out of a job.

Yours truly,



Jason MacLean  
President

JML/lb

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