

Toward Prosperity

Human Rights Commission Consultation

June 6th , 2000

Discussion

Vision:

- There needs to be a recognition of a “diverse” workforce in the vision. There will be more buy in with this term.
- Should be “All” Nova Scotians....

Business Climate:

- People look at the Human Rights Commission as a red tape agency. Life would be easier if we didn't have to follow these rules. People still want regulations, they want them to make sense and be consistent. People want to know the rules and how they are going to be applied.

Consultations:

- Are we consulting with labour movement? How about organizations for the poor? It is tough to measure where Economic Development ends and Community Services begin.

Banks:

- Banks are not dealing with new entrepreneurs. These new business are having trouble gaining access to capital.

Disabled Community:

- This group is important for any discussion. Accessibility is a huge issue in this community. Accessibility to buildings, through ramps and elevators and accessibility in regards to transportation.
- The disabled community should be consulted about any accessibility issues. Ex: buildings.

Infrastructure:

- Government need to develop partnerships with MTT and cable companies. Digital is the wave of the future and we must be ready for it.
- Building accessibility can be connected to infrastructure. What about day-care? Workforce flexibility? Must encourage behaviors you want and penalize behaviors you don't want.

Cape Breton:

- Port Hawkesbury area seem to doing fine. Are we forgetting about industrial Cape Breton? There is a breakdown in Cape Breton and we must find a way to bring communities together. We have to get rid of silos in Cape Breton communities.
- The only infrastructure in Cape Breton is roads. Air accessibility is not adequate.
- University College of Cape Breton is a important part of the Cape Breton economy. It is

innovative and trains highly skilled workers. It is getting a raw deal with its funding formula compared to other Nova Scotian universities.

Partnerships:

- Must develop a partnership with arts/culture community. This would benefit youth and give them options for different careers.

Volunteers:

- The role of volunteers is not being maximized in Nova Scotia.

Role of government:

- There can be economic savings if we encourage disabled workers in the workforce. It will get them off of social assistance and get them into a job where they can pay their bills. The role of government and business is to increase the participation rates of disabled people.
- Entrepreneurship training should be developed for early learners. If we instill this spirit in our children's mind, they will more likely want to go into business for themselves.
- Should give out rewards for companies that have day care and accessible entrances. Make it beneficial for the business.
- Government must attract immigrants to this province. They could help out our economy.

Thinking outside the box:

- We must think outside of the box. The bigger picture must be examined.
- Business will need disabled workers in a couple of years. We are not psyching up the workforce for disabled and minorities. The issue is not going away, change is coming.

Dependency:

- Why are equalization payments from the government a bad thing. We are a small province and we should accept this fact. We will never be able to compete with the big provinces.
- As long as we are dependent on the federal government, our direction will always be in the hands of the them. We could control our own agenda much better if we were not so dependent on Ottawa. It allows our leaders to exert more influence on the rest of the country.

Strategic Directions:

- We should re-think the term "communities."