

June 22, 2021

The Honourable Bernadette Jordan
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Re: Coastal Infilling: Northwest Arm, Halifax Nova Scotia

Dear Minister Jordan,

We are writing to you as concerned independent Senators representing Nova Scotia requesting your attention to the issue of infilling of the Halifax Northwest Arm.

As you may already be aware, current applications for infilling in this coastal/marine environment are made to the Ministry of Transport and do not require proponent driven application communication to your Ministry. There is no necessity for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to be automatically involved once an application has been filed and there is no requirement for DFO to conduct a project review to determine potential impact on coastal, inter-tidal and marine environments. We are of the opinion, that this process provides inadequate safeguards to these important environments. We respectfully suggest that any petition for infilling permission in the Northwest Arm automatically trigger a full DFO driven assessment applying the harmful alteration, disruption and destruction (HADD) criteria and that this review be made available to all relevant federal departments plus the Province of Nova Scotia and the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) prior to consideration by the Ministry of Transport for further evaluation of the application.

We further request that prior to providing approval for any infilling request in the Northwest Arm, that the federal government seek input from the Province of Nova Scotia and the HRM as it is the common interest of all three levels of government to come together on this issue of protecting the common good. Decisions about infilling requests in the Northwest Arm should only proceed upon agreement from all three levels of government.

The marine and coastal environment of the Northwest Arm requires protection from infilling which directly threatens marine habitat by destroying ocean floor integrity and indirectly by changing water movement and increasing water temperature. This area is home to lobster habitat and productive lobster fishery. It is a location in which eel grass, under threat in this region, grows and home to various finned and shellfish including mackerel, sea urchins and mussels. These will all be significantly and deprecatingly impacted by vanity driven infilling.

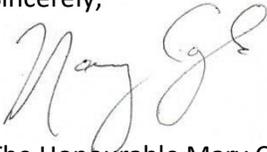
This area is not a commercial harbor, infilling has no economic value added to support its consideration while its effect will make the Northwest Arm more susceptible to the impact of rising ocean levels (as you know, the Nova Scotia coastline is at particular risk), including but not limited to increasing coastal

erosion. Vanity driven infilling also will negatively impact on recreational use of this unique place, damage the historic and cultural aspects of this location and will injure the value of this public good.

We have also written to the Ministers of Transport and Environment and Climate Change. We are aware that Mr. Andy Fillmore, the Member of Parliament whose riding includes the Northwest Arm, has also weighed in on this issue. We are including him and key provincial and municipal decision makers in this letter to you.

We are hopeful that you and your Ministerial Colleagues will move quickly and vigorously to address this important issue in your home province of Nova Scotia.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Mary Coyle
Senator, Nova Scotia



The Honourable Colin Deacon
Senator, Nova Scotia



The Honourable Kutcher
Senator, Nova Scotia

Cc: Minister of Transport, The Honourable Omar Aljabra
Minister of Environment and Climate Change, The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson
Premier of Nova Scotia, The Honourable Iain Rankin
Mayor of Halifax, His Worship Mike Savage
Andy Fillmore, MP Halifax
Waye Mason, District 7
Shawn Cleary, District 9
Patty Cuttell, District 11
Gary Burrill, MLA Halifax Chebucto
Labi Kousoulis, MLA Halifax Citadel-Sable Island
Lena Metlege Diab, MLA Halifax Armdale
Brendan Maguire, MLA Halifax Atlantic