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of Nova Scotia
Municipalities**

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District of Digby

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County of Cumberland

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Deputy Mayor Laurie Murley
Town of Windsor

Suite 1106, 1809 Barrington Street
Halifax, NS B3J 3K8

Tel: (902) 423-8331
Fax: (902) 425-5592
E-mail: info@unsm.ca
Web Site: www.unsm.ca

May 30, 2012

The Honourable Bernard Valcourt
Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)
Blue Cross Centre, 3rd Floor
644 Main Street
PO Box 6051
Moncton, NB E1C 9J8

Dear Minister Valcourt:

I am writing to express disappointment in your recent decision to eliminate federal funding in 2013 for Nova Scotia's 12 regional development agencies.

Our frustration stems from the fact that there was no consultation with Nova Scotia municipalities prior to reaching this decision. As you are aware, municipalities provide one-third of the funding for RDA's across the province. With the elimination of Federal funding and the recent provincial announcement that they will not make up the difference, the Province and municipalities will need to look at alternative economic development models.

While you have indicated that RDA's are not the answer to economic development, from my experience, RDA's still play a vital role in rural Nova Scotia. For example, the Annapolis Digby Economic Development Agency in the area I serve, has been instrumental in addressing business retention and expansion.

Elimination of Federal funding will result in financial hardship, particularly for our smaller towns and rural municipalities that want to retain their RDA.

In lieu of this cut, I am hoping that ACOA and ECBC will make available significant project funding for important economic development initiatives undertaken by our RDA's.

Sincerely,

Deputy Warden Jimmy MacAlpine
UNSM President

cc: UNSM Board of Directors

The Honourable Percy Paris, Minister of Economic and Rural
Development and Tourism