NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION OF MUNICIPALITIES

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October 1, 2026

Hon. Scott Armstrong
Minister of Justice
1690 Hollis Street
Halifax Nova Scotia
B3J 2L6

(Delivered via email)

RE: **NSFM Mayors, Wardens, and CAOs Meeting on New Billing Framework**

Dear Minister Armstrong,

On behalf of the municipalities of Nova Scotia, we want to express our gratitude to the Department of Justice (DoJ) for the Mayors, Wardens, and CAOs online meeting held on September 16, 2026. This meeting provided a crucial opportunity for members to receive a detailed update on provincial plans regarding the new billing framework and provide responses from their municipal perspective. We are pleased with the collaborative and responsive spirit of this effort, and we look forward to future opportunities to work collectively on policing governance and financing.

We further appreciate the effort of DoJ staff to record and respond to any questions that could not be answered directly in the meeting. To support this dialogue, we would like to highlight the following questions and request that a response be provided to NSFM in a way that can be distributed to our membership for further clarification.

It was great to hear that DoJ is open to out-of-the-box ideas on how to reallocate municipal funding for policing services. However, limitations on how the funds freed up by the new billing framework can be spent were quickly identified and expressed. It would be most helpful to establish and distribute a list of eligible expenses or a rationale for ineligible expenses to help our members identify opportunities where funds could be spent. While final decisions will be established in written agreements, NSFM would like to get a better sense of what reallocation opportunities are eligible. In addition to clear eligibility guidelines, we would like to further inquire if saving funds in reserve for future costs could be deemed eligible. Municipal costs associated with policing services are significant and susceptible to annual increases. Enabling this eligibility would promote effective long-term budgeting and allow municipalities to leverage funds strategically to achieve greater results.

With the mention of reconciliation and actual costs in correspondence announcing the new billing framework on July 29, 2026, members are concerned with how far these actual costs may diverge from forecasted costs. On what basis does the DoJ assure municipalities under the PPSA that their annual costs will not climb more than 5%, and can this assurance be put in writing in correspondence to NSFM? There was mention of some modelling of 5-year timelines; NSFM respects this quality of work and would be interested in learning more about this 5-year modelling process and its outcomes.

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Most importantly, NSFM members are interested in the calculations underlying the new billing framework. Can the DoJ provide a more detailed breakdown of how new municipal cost amounts were equated and how the new factors being accounted for in this new framework are included in this equation?

Again, NSFM appreciates the efforts of DoJ to respond to pressing needs and seize opportunities to increase the standard of public safety in Nova Scotia. These efforts will be best executed through collaborative means with municipalities who have a ground-level perspective on what improvements and resources are necessary. We look forward to our continued dialogue with you and your staff.

Sincerely,

Mayor David Mitchell
President, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities

Juanita Spencer
CEO, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities

cc: Hayley Crichton, Executive Director, Policing Services and Security Division,
Department of Justice