



February 27, 2020

Honourable Blaine Higgs, Premier  
Chancery Place,  
675 King Street,  
Fredericton, NB  
E3B 1E9

**Subject: Loss of Trust in Health Care Leadership**

Dear Premier Higgs:

As you are no doubt aware, the suspension of health care reforms introduced by your government has done much to calm the immediate reaction to them. That said, we wish to inform you that any belief that this calm is reflective of acceptance would be a mistake.

The duty to communicate changes to our health care system in a clear, comprehensive, and timely manner rests entirely with government and the agents of government. The roll out of your recent reforms has been nothing less than disastrous and statements by Minister Flemming and the CEOs of the health authorities have only heightened anger in our communities. They have been quick to assert that public reaction is strictly an emotional one based on a lack of understanding and an entrenched mindset. These statements are condescending and demean the very public that began identifying verifiable flaws and failures of the reforms within hours of their release (those released so far).

Mr. Premier, a critical trust has been lost between your government and thousands of New Brunswickers. You have said that this spring you will visit communities to consult and listen to stakeholders followed by a health summit in June. Minister Flemming and the CEOs of the health authorities have been clear that they will not be supportive of those efforts. All three have clearly indicated that consultation beyond what has already been done is not needed and that their plans are the best and only path.

The Town of Sussex, the Village of Sussex Corner, and the Village of Norton believe that meaningful reform must happen but that it must include ideas from frontline health professionals and other community stakeholders.

The very people you wish to consult about health reforms will never accept the validity of the process if the current leadership team remains the same. Collectively, we are calling on you to identify new leaders within the Department of Health and Regional Health Authorities to restore trust and bring credibility to your pending consultations and health summit.

Sincerely,



Juliana Booth  
Mayor  
Village of Norton



Steven Stackhouse  
Mayor  
Village of Sussex Corner



Marc Thome  
Mayor  
Town of Sussex

Cc: Bruce Northrup, MLA Sussex-Fundy-St. Martins.  
Gary Crossman, MLA Hampton  
Bill Oliver, MLA Kings Centre.  
Ross Wetmore, MLA Gagetown-Petitcodiac