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Halifax Regional Council
October 12, 2004

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Betty MacDonald
Betty MacDonald, Director of Governance & Strategic Initiatives

DATE: October 7, 2004

SUBJECT: Throne Speech

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

On Tuesday October 5, 2004 the Governor General of Canada opened Parliament with a reading of the Speech from the Throne.

On Wednesday October 6, 2004 Prime Minister Paul Martin responded with the Prime Minister's Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

BACKGROUND

Each Parliament begins with a Speech from the Throne which sets out the broad goals and directions of the government.

The following provides excerpts from the Speech and the Response to the Speech that may be of interest to the municipality. Staff will be researching and following-up on areas of priority to HRM. Full copies of the Speech and the Response are available on line at: www.pm.gc.ca.

DISCUSSION

Speech from the Throne

-excerpts-

A Strong Economy

Government will pursue a 5 point strategy to build an even more globally competitive and sustainable economy.

- ❑ **invest in people**
 - develop a new Workplace Skills Strategy
 - help integrate new Canadians into workforce
- ❑ **strengthen Canada's ability to generate and apply new ideas**
 - ensure a supply of venture capital
 - develop policies to foster Canadian capabilities
- ❑ **provide "smart government" to make it easier for businesses to do business in Canada**
 - transparent and predictable regulatory system
 - modernize the Competition Act
- ❑ **commitment to regional and sectoral development**
 - Support for regional and rural economic development will target the fundamentals:
 - (i) skills upgrading, support for research and development, community development, and modern infrastructure such as broadband communication
 - (ii) employing the regional agencies and tools such as the Atlantic Innovation Fund.
- ❑ **promotion of trade and investment**
 - sound monetary and fiscal policies as well as competitive taxes, efficiently targeted to promote economic growth

Canada's Cities and Communities

- Through the New Deal for Cities and Communities - the Government will make available, for the benefit of municipalities, a portion of the federal gas tax, growing over the next five years. These funds will enable municipalities to make long-term financial commitments needed to help contain urban sprawl and to invest in new sustainable infrastructure projects in areas like transit, roads, clean water and sewers.
- Expanding partnership approach to cooperate in service delivery to addresses issues such as: urban renewal and immigrant retention.
- The Government will foster cultural institutions and policies that aspire to excellence, reflect a diverse and multicultural society, respond to the new challenges of globalization and the digital economy, and promote diversity of views and cultural expression at home and abroad.

Our Environment

- The Government will work with the private sector to improve the commercialization of the

best new environmental technologies.

- The Government will place increased focus on energy efficiency and energy research and development.
- Build on efforts already underway, including support for wind-power production in Canada, stimulated by a quadrupling of the Wind Power Production Incentive.

Prime Minister's Reply to the Speech from the Throne

-excerpts-

- make it easier for new immigrants to quickly find their way into the work force
- fund innovation and research and development - mandate the Canadian Academies of Science
- New Deal - Canada's communities face very different challenges and require very different solutions. Will work with provinces, cities and communities on the mechanism and ramp-up for our transfer of a portion of the gas tax — which will mean an additional federal investment of \$2-billion a year when fully implemented. Goal is to ensure the funds are predictable and reliable enough for every community
- working with other orders of government on infrastructure and regional development
- need to align our policies and incentives to advance Canada to a position of leadership in the fields of renewable energy, efficiency and conservation
- will devote a significant portion of the net proceeds from our sale of Petro-Canada, at least \$1-billion, to support, develop and commercialize new environmental technologies — technologies that will help not only Canada but other nations achieve a healthier environment

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

N/A

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

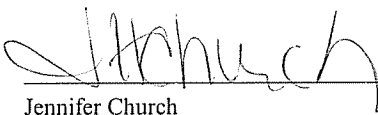
N/A

ATTACHMENTS

None.

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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490-3677