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CANADIAN CONSTITUTION FOUNDATION

TO: Tim Houston, Premier of Nova Scotia
7th Floor, One Government Place,
1700 Granville Street, Halifax, N.S.

AND TO: Tory Rushton, Minister, Department of Natural Resources and Renewables
3rd Floor, Founders Square, 1701 Hollis Street, Halifax, N.S.

Sent via email to premier@novascotia.ca and mindnr@novascotia.ca

Re: TRAVEL BAN

August 6, 2025

Dear Premier Houston and Minister Rushton,

I am Counsel with the Canadian Constitution Foundation (the "CCF"), a national legal charity dedicated to protecting Canadians' rights and freedoms through public education and litigation.

I am writing out of concern that your provincewide ban on entry into the woods[1] for the purposes of travelling, camping, fishing, picnicking, or any other purpose without a valid permit arbitrarily infringes on the rights and freedoms of Nova Scotians. While the *Forests Act*[2] contemplates restricting travel into particular "zones" to protect the forests, it is unreasonable to interpret the act as authorizing blanket provincewide bans on activities that pose no serious risk of sparking fires. This blanket travel ban proclamation infringes the right to liberty protected by section 7 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms,*[3] limits common law rights, and may impact on the Aboriginal and treaty rights protected by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

A $25,000 fine for hiking, birdwatching or fishing in the woods is also grossly disproportionate.

I urge you to rescind these travel restrictions immediately and restore the liberties of Nova Scotians. If you do not, the CCF will consider taking legal action against the province.

Sincerely,

Josh Dehaas

[1] https://novascotia.ca/natr/forestprotection/wildfire/woods-proclamation_2025-08-05.pdf
[2] RSNS 1989, c 179, s 25 [*Forests Act*].
[3] See *R v Heywood*, [1994] 3 SCR 761.