



Statement on Auditor General's Report Regarding MLA Expenses

No doubt you have either read or heard about yesterday's Auditor General's report on MLA expenditures. Many of you have called or e-mailed my office or home asking whether any expense I claimed was named in the report. Clearly you are concerned about this and I completely understand this concern as this is an issue of public trust.

While the auditor's report covered very little of the time I have been an MLA, I wish you to know that no expense I have claimed since becoming an MLA was either named in the report, nor has been of the type the Auditor General has raised concerns about. This includes concerns about advertising, alleged personal expenses, staff payments, and "double-dipping" of certain expenses.

You should know that even before the Auditor General released his report, the legislature took some steps towards better accountability and expenditure reduction. These include elimination of the annual technology allowance, elimination of the \$45,000 tax free severance, a reduction by 21% of constituency office budgets for the remainder of this fiscal year, freezing staff and MLA salaries, and ensuring that the province is owner of any items purchases for the constituency office. As well, the Speaker's Office has hired someone to review the entire expense system and recommend changes.

You have chosen me to represent you in Dartmouth East and in doing so you have put your trust in me to manage the budgets I am entrusted with in an appropriate fashion. I am sorry that yesterday's report may make you feel let down and further the distrust people in political life. I pledge to work with you and the legislature towards addressing concerns raised by the Auditor General in his report. Should you wish to discuss this further with me please do not hesitate to contact me.



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