



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2023003

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RE: Protection of the Isthmus of Chignecto discussed with N.S. premier

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – The protection of the Isthmus of Chignecto was the topic of discussion when Amherst Mayor David Kogon and local historian Bill Casey met with Premier Tim Houston and Cumberland-South MLA Tory Ruston on Jan. 18, 2023.

“We met with the premier for about 45 minutes,” Kogon said. “During that time, we outlined in our presentation the threat the isthmus is facing due to rising sea levels and an increase in extreme weather events, as well as our concern the steps needed to prevent the threat from becoming a reality were not being implemented in a timely fashion.”

The pair pointed out several studies have indicated an extreme weather event in which the local dikes were breached would devastate the transportation links crossing the isthmus, thereby preventing the \$50 million in commercial good that cross the isthmus on a daily basis from getting to market in other parts of North America.



AMHERST MAYOR DAVID KOGON, NOVA SCOTIA PREMIER TIME HOUSTON, LOCAL HISTORIAN BILL CASEY AND CUMBERLAND-SOUTH MLA TORY RUSHTON MET RECENTLY TO DISCUSS PROTECTING THE VITAL TRANSPORTATION LINKS THAT CROSS THE ISTHMUS OF CHIGNECTO FROM RISING SEA LEVELS AND EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS. (N.S. GOVERNMENT PHOTO)





“We made it clear to the premier that it just isn’t the Amherst-Sackville, N.B., area that would be harmed, but all of the province, including the Port of Halifax, which would lose its advantage of getting goods to market faster than any other port on the continent,” the mayor said.

Casey and Kogon noted another study – the Chignecto Isthmus Climate Change Adaptation Comprehensive Engineering and Feasibility Study – offered three solutions: raising the existing dikes at an estimated cost of just over \$200 million, building new dikes at just over \$189 million or raising the existing dikes and install steel sheet pile walls at select locations at a cost just over \$300 million.

The study also noted it could take up to 10 years before the solutions were put in place. Given the destruction that occurred when hurricane Fiona hit, Kogon and Casey pointed out that time frame needs to be shorted as extreme weather events are occurring on a more regular basis.

The pair also expressed their concern the federal, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick governments didn’t seem to be moving towards implementing the protective measures because those governments have yet to decide on the solution they will pursue nor does there appear to be any discussion on moving the project forward among those senior levels of government.

“We understand there are engineering factors that affect the timing of a solution,” the mayor said. “We don’t want the solution implemented so fast that it doesn’t do the job properly, but we feel the movement on this very important project is taking longer than necessary.”

Kogon said the premier and Rushton, who is also the minister of natural resources and renewables, listened intently to their presentation.

“They got it,” the mayor added. “The premier pledged his support and agreed to speeding up the process to protect the isthmus if possible. He promised to look into it and to move it along, and to ensure it remained a top priority with his government.

“We are thankful for that commitment and look forward to seeing steps taken in the near future that will ensure the transportation links that connect Nova Scotia with the rest of North America are protected from rising sea levels and extreme weather events.”





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Direct enquiries to:
Tom McCoag,
Corporate Communications Officer
902-694-6265
tmccoag@amherst.ca

