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Hon. Mary Wilson
Service New Brunswick
Lincoln Place
P.O. Box 1998
Fredericton, NB E3B 5G4

March 21, 2024

Greetings, Minister Wilson:

The municipality of Eastern Charlotte is adding its voice to the Union of Municipalities of New Brunswick's (UMNB) recent letter regarding the insert included by Service New Brunswick (SNB) in the property tax bills. We are disappointed at your decision to pass blame to our community and avoid acknowledging the crucial role the Provincial government plays in municipal finances.

Local governments only have the ability to set the municipal tax rate. Every other function is controlled by your Department or the Provincial government. Unlike the Provincial government, municipalities have an obligation to provide balanced budgets and only have one primary vehicle to do it. Residential assessment is our principal source of revenue and has been since Confederation. Even though the expectations of local government have changed significantly, our fiscal system has not. We are managing 21st Century challenges, with a 19th Century fiscal framework.

For instance, over the past two years, since the implementation of local governance reform resulted in our local amalgamation, the community of Eastern Charlotte has lost over \$260,000 of Unconditional Grant funding from the Province.

It is critical for our orders of government to work together to make a difference for our shared citizens. We would ask that when sharing this kind of information in the future, you tell the whole story so everyone can understand, and not only select portions which risk being misinterpreted.

We thank you for your attention to this matter.

Regards,

John Craig
Mayor, Eastern Charlotte

cc. Glen Savoie, Minister of Local Government; Andrea Anderson-Mason, MLA Fundy-The-Isles-Saint John West; Ernie Steeves, Minister of Finance; Union of Municipalities of New Brunswick