The Honourable Christopher Mitchelmore

Minister, Tourism, Culture, Industry & Innovation

CMitchelmore@gov.nl.ca

PO Box 8700

St. John’s, NL A1B 4J6

Dear Minister Mitchelmore:

I am *[Insert Name]* and I own/operate/manage *[Insert Business Name]* in *[Insert Town/City]*. I wish to draw your attention to the issue of unlicensed accommodations in this province. Tourism is a major economic contributor in Newfoundland and Labrador generating almost $1.13 billion in annual spending, and accounting for 9% of all jobs in this province. The tourism industry has been grappling with the issue of unlicensed accommodations for a very long time, however in recent years, the number of unlicensed accommodations has risen significantly.

As a tourism operator, I am negatively impacted by the unlevel playing field that exists between licensed and regulated accommodations and those that are unlicensed and unregulated, and am looking to Government to take a leadership role on this issue and protect this industry. The tourism industry is extremely disappointed that no consequences for operating without a Tourist Establishment Licence are being enforced. Currently, there are *[Insert Number]* unlicensed accommodations operating in the area of my business that I am aware of. [*Optional:* *I have attached all contact information available on these unlicensed operators to this letter.]*

There are a number of concerns associated with the proliferation of unlicensed accommodations in the province. Unlicensed accommodations do not fall under any of the regulatory, legal, taxation, health and safety or insurance laws that licensed accommodators do. Without the responsibility of proper licensing, approvals, taxation and insurance, unregulated accommodators have a significant unfair advantage in the industry and are often able to pass those cost savings on to the consumer, adding to their appeal in the market. The provincial tourism industry has worked hard in recent years to elevate our brand and implement quality assurance programs to protect that brand, as well as the consumer, including the implementation of the **Tourism Assurance Plan** and evolution of **Tourism Quality Assurance of NL (TQANL)**. Unregulated accommodations have the potential to negatively impact Newfoundland and Labrador’s reputation as a premiere tourism destination.

I support Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador’s position that the key to success in the new reality of today’s travel and tourism sector is equity – ensuring all tourism and travel product providers operate in the spirit of legitimate competition, abide by all regulatory and licensing requirements in order to operate in the province, and join the industry network that is working collaboratively to grow tourism in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I respectfully ask the Provincial Government to act now to create equity in the industry and begin the process for legislative change. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or wish to discuss the factors currently impacting tourism in Newfoundland and Labrador. *[Insert Contact Info]*

Sincerely,

*[Insert Signature/Business Name]*

cc: Hospitality Newfoundland & Labrador,

 71 Goldstone Street (Suite 102), St. John’s, NL, A1B 5C3, hnl@hnl.ca